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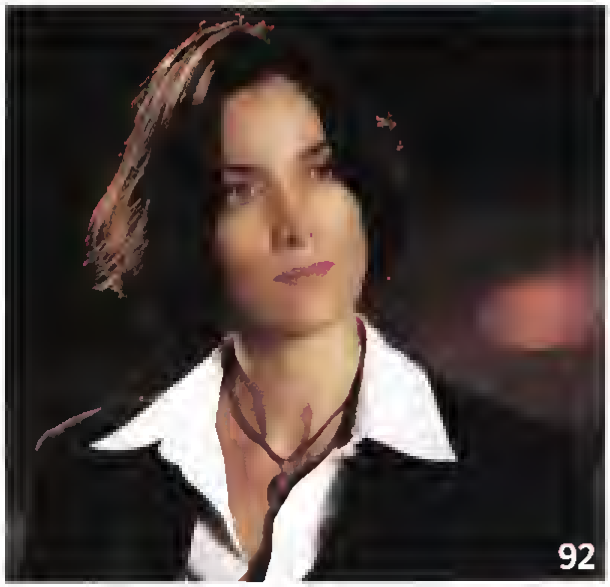


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THE TECH COMFORT ZONE

You lose the need to fuss with your latest toy and, instead, use it only when necessary

LIKE MANY PEOPLE, I have an ambivalent relationship with technology—I'm delighted when I don't have to use it, but equally infuriated when I need it and it lets me down. One of the declared joys of our country place is that it has no television, cable, cell or online access—a point of pride for my wife and me during our two weeks off recently was that we never touched our laptop computer. Upon our return, on the other hand, I was incensed when I hit a cold zone downtown where my mobile phone wouldn't work, and am sulking because the wireless attachment for my laptop at home is misfiring, so I have to work from a desk instead of a couch.

For more significant examples of this trend line, look to our Prime Minister, whose self-proclaimed distaste for technology is famous—but who is seldom found these days without BlackBerry in hand (and, to give Paul Martin his due, he says he makes a point of using it only in private, rather than interrupting conversations with others to check out his email). The point, as we say in our cover story (page 37), is that every day technology continues to change our lives in ways we didn't think possible even a few years ago. The real surprise isn't so much the ongoing new innovations that greet us as it is the occasional jarring reminders of old traditions we've almost completely left behind. When was the last time you phoned someone—only to be greeted by a busy signal? Have you talked to a bank teller lately, or been to a store that *didn't* accept payment by ATM card?

One consequence of this is that we get blasé about technology to the point where we forget how many highly hyped innovations enjoy only a brief shelf life before they shuffle off and die. Take a bow, eight-track tapes, Beta video cassettes, laser discs and even the cutting edge Palm Pilots of a few years back—you had to dock them in a special instrument before they would allow you access to the rest of the world.

The real comfort zone with gadgetry comes when you lose the need to fuss with your latest toy and use it, instead, only when necessary. One of the initial attractions of a BlackBerry, for example, is that you can spend all day checking emails and the latest news from the different online sources it offers. But then comes the realization that just because you *can*, do you really *need* to be so obsessive?

> **New gadgets are less surprising than jarring reminders of old traditions we've almost completely left behind**

And even as there have never been more news sources, many end up showing exactly the same images and information about exactly the same news. The Athens Olympics are a case in point (page 68). How many times and ways did we need to see Perdita Felicien's fall? After all, what should be remembered most about Felicien isn't her fall—it's the dignity she demonstrated in the aftermath—refusing to offer excuses, and apologizing to Canadians even as her heart was broken. She's the woman you want your daughter to grow up to be.

Some things never change, such as the expectations we place upon the stars of our favourite national game. As Charlie Gillis writes (page 64), hockey's World Cup offers Canada a chance for redemption on the world athletic stage after a disappointing Games. Unlike our relationship with tech, we're not ambivalent about hockey: we want the future to be just like the past—filled with the thrill of victory.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

response@macleans.ca to comment on The Editor's Letter

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EQUINOXE

'I'm so sick of hearing about this low-carb fad. People need to understand the best diet is a balanced one, coupled with exercise.'—Jamie Friesen, Edmonton

School days

I applaud your feature on Canada's best public secondary schools ("Canada's best schools," Cover, Aug. 23). As a former Earl Haig Secondary student in Toronto, current high school history and English teacher, and the proud older sister of one of the co-founders of the Zoom Student Film Festival featured in your Earl Haig profile, I think that we too often focus on the academic aspect of the high school experience. We should not forget that the students are doing a large part of their character formation at school, outside of the classroom. That the public school system has been able to put aside all criticism and foster such creative and enthusiastic students is a testament to teachers, administrators and the students themselves—an achievement that standardized testing can never hope to measure.

Debbie Lerech, Toronto

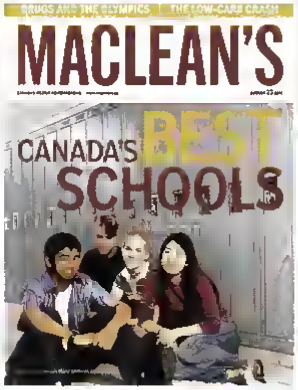
Your cover story brought home to me, yet again, how unfairly the public system is managed. A chosen few students get unbelievable perks, while others fight to keep the basics. We don't need any funding going to these special projects when simple, local education is in jeopardy for so many rural children.

Constance Prichard, Melbourne, Ont.

As an Ottawa parent of two elementary school age boys, I was particularly interested, and then extremely disheartened to read about Ottawa's Canterbury High School. I hope the flippant referral to the "troublesome testosterone factor" in regard to the success of its girls only classes was an ill-conceived phrase by your writer and not a comment by the school's representatives. With attitudes like that, it is no wonder that boys are dropping out of high school at higher rates than girls and are less likely to pursue post-secondary education.

Lisa Jamieson, Ottawa

From its beginnings as Overlea Secondary School through to its reincarnation as Marc Garneau Collegiate, this Toronto school has always meant a great deal to both its staff and alumni like myself. It has always drawn from



low-income areas, yet has produced exceptional students—a tribute to its dedicated staff. Concerned, dedicated teachers made the difference then as they do now.

Dawn Dickinson, Toronto

For the past number of years you have published an annual university rankings in which Thunder Bay's Lakehead University is way down your list. Now you seem to be making your same silly appraisal of high schools. What gives you the right to rate any school?

G.J. Poling, Thunder Bay, Ont.

Hellenic feat

I've attended several Olympic events and I'm happy to say that all those who warned that Greece wouldn't pull it off were dead wrong. The Games have been awesome. There's a lot of security, the volunteers are friendly, beer and bottled water are cheap, garbage and recycling bins are everywhere, plus lineups at concessions are virtually non-existent. The Athens 2004 Olympics have been well-organized, well-run, completely professional in every respect. It's too bad that many stayed away because of all the negative press. The tiny nation of 11 million has pulled it off in a big way, proving that thousands of years after having given the world science, art, culture, democracy and the original Olympic Games, Ellas has still got it.

Peter Hantzakos, Toronto

Thank you to Brian Price, Olympic rowing competitor, who talked about his challenge of beating cancer as a child ("My 'second biggest challenge,'" Voiceover, Aug. 23). His story about the healing environment that Camp Oochigeas provides, along with his continued involvement with this summer camp for kids with cancer, even after his own cancer went into remission, is truly inspirational.

Jannice Foreman, Victoria

Responding to hate

Jonathon Gatehouse's treatment of the Jewish response to recent acts of anti-Semitism in Montreal ("Pride and prejudice," Society, Aug. 2) depicts us as hysterical, anti-immigrant types, reacting to Arabs as Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and his government did to Jews in the 1930s. This is far from the truth. The leading organizations of our community are not and never have been anti-immigrant. It is quite a leap to move from my plea to "bring new arrivals into the mainstream" while screening out radical imams as prospective Canadians, to characterizing this as an anti-immigrant reaction.

Stephen Scheinberg, past chair for League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, Montreal

The carb question

I am personally sick of hearing about all these new trends and fads regarding dieting methods ("Low-carb bubble," Business, Aug. 23). It all boils down to the classic philosophy of eating a variety of foods in moderation and combining it with exercise. Everything else is just dressing on the salad, so to speak. And, we shouldn't forget that exercising won't just make you lose fat, it'll also make you feel stronger, healthier and more energetic.

Richard Ahn, Toronto

Regarding the possible end of the fad for low-carb diets: I always found it strange that people who want to lose weight would cut out an entire food group. If people want to lose weight, then the only permanent way is through eating properly and moving more. This isn't a new concept, but people always want the magic diet pill. Atkins claimed to be this pill, but it didn't work. It just took dieters a long time to figure that out.

Stephen Bujas, Toronto

I can't see people going back to eating the way they used to. Sure there is the "fad" thing going on, and, yes, it might have peaked, but the low-carb diet is here to stay.

Rod Barr, Calgary

As more and more people cut down on their carb intake and start seeing how easy it is to keep the pounds off and still eat till you're full, their successes will entice others to give it a try. I've tried other diets without success. After two weeks of no potatoes, pasta, bread, rice and corn, I lost 10 lb. In total, I've dropped 25 lb. and have been holding it there for over a year. I now cheat occasionally and enjoy high-carb treats, but easily maintain my desired weight.

Dan Hnyduk, Prince Albert, Sask.

War motivations

I was very pleased with your interview with retired Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie. Like MacKenzie, I have never believed the invasion of Iraq was motivated by anything other than the free world's need to get a madman out of power and hopefully lend some stability to a very unstable region ("War was justified, and overdue," The Maclean's Interview, Aug. 23). Yes, the coalition has had a difficult time, but once the people of Iraq have what we take for granted—medical care, freedom of expression, women's rights and a robust economy fuelled by oil—they will give thanks that Saddam and his sons are no more.

Bill Terry, Fort McMurray, Alta.

Maj.-Gen. MacKenzie maintains that the U.S. can still justify the war, given Iraq's treatment of minorities and its defiance of UN resolutions. But the U.S. was willing to ignore similar bad behaviour in other countries such as Sudan, Rwanda, Nigeria, Libya, even Communist China and Russia. No, they invaded because of what Iraq has, oil, as well as what they don't have, a strong military.

Eric Kirkpatrick, Vancouver



Unlike many, Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie supported the war

Concerning the American debacle in Iraq, Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie is simply wrong in his claim that the "war was justified, and overdue." The world needs no convincing of the benefit of Saddam's removal, just as most of us would rejoice at the removal of the leaders of Zimbabwe, North Korea, Iran, Sudan, even the United States today. But there was a bigger issue at stake for the world post-9/11—the removal of terrorism. Just imagine what the resources expended in Iraq could have done for the removal of terrorism, the true enemy of freedom, in the country where its source truly exists—Afghanistan.

Larry Wade, Ottawa

The Iraq war has cost more than US$125 billion, with no end in sight. Was Saddam Hussein's removal worth that US$125 billion, which could have been spent on enormous health, education, infrastructure, and other societal improvements in the U.S. or abroad? Was his removal worth the estimated 10,000 Iraqi civilians killed and the further 40,000 or so wounded? Not in my view, but then, unlike Lewis MacKenzie, I am not a general.

Ric Moodie, Winnipeg

Saddam Hussein was a menace and a murderer, a threat to all his neighbours, as well as to the rest of the world. If more nations joined the coalition, the present difficulties may have been prevented. Instead, we let the Americans bleed for all of us, and on top of that, we have the gall to criticize them.

Pavel Calda, Halifax

A vote for Bush

As a pro-Bush Canadian, I'm still hoping for a more balanced position in your approach to the U.S. political scene. But so far, no such luck. The most recent example: two anti-Bush letters in your letters to the editor secoon ("Four more years?" Aug. 23). Where were the counter comments? I am confident that Americans realize the implications of a Bush re-election—and are both proud and confident with what they see.

Don Barnes, Ottawa

A rainbow of extremism

I find myself somewhat bemused by Mary Janigan's reference to "extremists" among the supporters of Stephen Harper ("Harper's hard sell," Janigan, Aug. 23). If there are right wing extremists, are there not also left wing extremists? I would nominate many Liberal and most NDP members for that dubious distinction.

Ray Mulrooney, Toronto

Balancing act | The difficult task of deciding what's important

From news to pop culture, the interests of our readers vary greatly. And in each issue, our editors aim to balance those interests. Sometimes you agree with our decisions—sometimes not. "Though I appreciate his vast talent," writes Shirley Theriault of Ladysmith, B.C., "I was disappointed that, in the Aug. 16 issue, you wrote more on Prince than on the problems in Sudan."

Greece has pulled off the Games in a big way—proving that even after thousands of years, Ellas has still got it

PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM CICCICIOPPO

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Montréal www.tourisme-montreal.org Montreal is a city ruled by passion where everything is a cause for celebration and a festival is around every corner The collective love of music, good humour, food and nightlife are all reasons enough to turn the entire city into one large realm of revelry and joie de vivre Such is life 'After 5" à la Montréal

festivals

Montréal is a world capital of festivals, hosting over 10 festivals and international events throughout the year that range from the traditional to the avant-garde



The **Festival International de Jazz de Montreal** proudly sponsored by TD Canada Trust will be held from June 30-July 11 offering 12 days of non-stop music from noon to midnight right in the heart of downtown. If you can't make the event there are dozens of clubs to serve this jazz-mad city. www.jazzmontreal.com has up-to-the-minute info on dates and venues.



The Just For Laughs Festival (above) will have the city in stitches for 11 days in July. The 25th annual Festival International de Jazz de Montréal (left) runs from June 30 to July 11 and showcases dozens of top acts from around the globe

The world's largest and most renowned comedy festival, **Just For Laughs**, is back to tickle your funny bone from July 15 to 25 You can find more funny stuff year round at the Just For Laughs Museum and local comedy clubs

Artists, musicians famous performers and rising stars from a dozen countries meet up each summer in Montréal for **Les FrancoFolies** a celebration of French music from around the world This year's event runs from July 29 to August 7

The **Montréal World Film Festival** from August 26 to September 9, showcases films from more than 70 countries

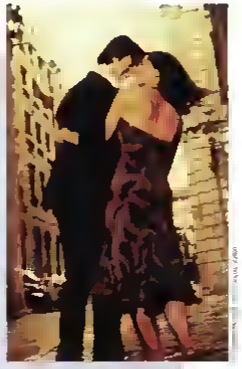
Visit www.founsm-montreal.org to learn more about Montréal's festivals.

Don't miss the Casino de Montreal (above) for 124 gaming tables and 3,047 slot machines. Enjoy five-diamond gourmet dining at Nuances restaurant and entertaining acts at the Cabaret.

nightlife

When people elsewhere are settling down in front of the 11 o'clock news, Montrealers are just getting geared up for a night on the town. Nightlife in this city is legendary and there is no shortage of options to choose from

If you want to experience the pure Québécois culture, head down to Old Montréal's merry boîtes à chansons to enjoy traditional music and song Along Saint-Denis Street, mix with urban sophisticates in a range of trendy restaurants and bars Further west Crescent Street has long been the chief watering hole and meeting place for Montréal's English-speaking community and visitors Along Saint-Laurent Boulevard, better known as "the Main", and in the neighbouring



Prince-Arthur Street and Plateau Mont-Royal district, you'll discover a cosmopolitan bohemia of food, drink and entertainment to keep you occupied well into the wee hours

bon appétit



In the mood for some local fare? Try a famous Montréal smoked meat sandwich or poutine a tasty Québécois specialty of french fries covered with cheese curd and topped with gravy And then there are the Montréal bagels Though you can find a facsimile in most Canadian cities visiting a 24-hr bagel factory in Outremont is an experience in the real thing—and a great place to meet people as well

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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSÉ PARÉ

OUR WRITERS IN ATHENS

As the 2004 Summer Olympics drew to a close, we caught up with our writers Jonathon Gatehouse (left) and Ken MacQueen to get a sense of what it was like to be in Athens.

What are your most memorable experiences from the Summer Games?

MacQueen: Witnessing the Greeks trying to get their head around baseball. The locals politely watched the games and sometimes applauded at the wrong times. There was organ music, beer, and hot dogs—though I'm not sure you'd want to eat them.

Speaking of the stands, what did you think about attendance at events?

Gatehouse: It wasn't as busy as some would have liked, but I think the Greeks were victims of bad press. The big events were really well-attended, and the Greeks are very lively in the competitions where they show promise.

MacQueen: You have to remember that a lot of Greeks left their apartments to avoid the heat and crowds, and they could make huge sums of money by renting out their homes to tourists and reporters like us.

Gatehouse: What struck me was that there were always Canadian flags in the crowd when Canadians were competing. American tounsts are traditionally a big part of the Olympics, but they stayed away this year because of the threat of terronsm—that's another reason attendance was down.

What was security like?

MacQueen: The security force was as unobtrusive as an 800-lb. gorilla can be. Email and voice lines were being monitored. There ware surveillance-cameras on the streets and big white blimps overhead as well as a fleet of helicopters that are tied into a central system. You had to go through airport-like security whenever you entered a building, which can wear you down when you have fo do it 10 times a day.

What did you find most impressive?

Gatehouse: Unquestionably, the athletes themselves.

MacQueen: You have to admire people who have given so much of their lives to one event and then three minutes after having done it, give you an interview.

Help shape what's inside *Maclean's* by registering as a member of the *Maclean's* Advisory Panel at *www.macleans.ca/ap*. For further information about this article, contact behindthescenes@macleans.ca

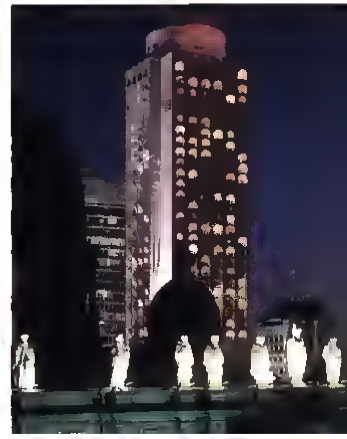
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UPFRONT

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JIM MacMILLAN/AP

American soldiers rest up outside a bombed-out inn, waiting to see if the latest peace deal will hold

Iraq | Rebels leave with their guns as a truce quiets Najaf

After three weeks of the fiercest, close-quartered fighting in the entire Iraq conflict, the guns of Najaf finally went silent. What happened next was almost as eerie. As dawn broke on the bomb-battered city, thousands of ordinary Shia pilgrims strode through its grim streets to reclaim the revered Imam Ali Mosque at the heart of this tortured dispute. Going the other way, the rebel Shia fighters of renegade cleric Muqtada al Sadr, many of them barefoot and exhausted, carried out their dead and also their rocket launchers, barely concealed in carts.

The truce that ended the bitter siege left Najaf a weapons-free zone but allowed al-Sadr's militia to take away its guns, making it a force to contend with in the future—perhaps. The glory here belonged to Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who raced back after a heart operation in London to re-establish religious control over the shrine and, by extension, the upstart al-Sadr. It was not a totally triumphant return. In the chaos of the day leading up to the pact, about 110 mostly Shia Iraqis were killed and 500 wounded. Some of those were killed by Iraq's National Guard, one of the groups now entrusted with maintaining civil order in Najaf. Nothing in this conflict is ever free of an explosive undercurrent.

Quote of the week | 'I don't know what happened. I'm an athlete. I live on the edge.' Hard-luck hurdler **PERDITA FELICIEN** after taking an Olympic-size tumble

ScoreCard

AIR CANADA
People's airline bumps Stanley Cup from cargo hold on crowded flight to Fort St. John, B.C. Celebrated silverware has jet-setted around globe for years meeting fans. Now it knows how ordinary Canadians fare.

MILITARY BRASS
Two soldiers caught in fog are inadvertently left out overnight on frigid Baffin Island, deep in polar bear country, without guns. The two are part of large military exercise meant to *simulate* northern disaster. Great recruiting for force that wants to add 5,000 soldiers.

DRUNKS
U.S. firm unveils alcohol vaporizer allowing imbibers to inhale rather than swallow liquor. Bar flies rejoice, sucking up three drinks over lunch much simpler. Plus, device aims to reduce hangovers. Next challenge: how to smoke at the same time.

CAROLYN PARRISH
Grit MP reprises "bastards" blunder, says won't join U.S. "coalition of idiots" backing missile defence. Hill press gang smells blood in water, and PM is steamed. Perhaps calculating cost of keeping Parrish in his own coalition.

Mansbridge on the Record



SHOWTIME FOR MARTIN

The first ministers' health care summit will determine the government's future

THINK BACK, way back, to the beginning of this year. To January or February when the candidates for the U.S. presidency were traipsing through the windswept cornfields of Iowa and the snow-clogged roadways of New Hampshire. Back then, the race was wide open, the possibilities endless and the interest, at least from the large media contingent and the busloads of campaign insiders, was pretty intense. But because the campaign is so long, the general public rarely seems to get engaged until much later. A fact that long ago spawned this basic principle of U.S. presidential politics: The campaign doesn't really begin until after the Labour Day weekend. That, or at least so goes the theory, is when minds start to focus.

In Canada, we don't have the same kind of saying, perhaps because our politics is far less predictable. And this fall may be a case in point. Paul Martin has had the summer to try to figure out how to make his minority government work—no small task considering he had a majority government for the first six months of this year and even many Liberals, especially the defeated ones, now agree he didn't make that one work.

History records that the average life of a minority government in Canada is less than 18 months, so with Martin already entering month three, the clock is clearly ticking. You have to believe this government's future will be riding largely on the health care summit with the premiers coming up in mid-September. Keep in mind that Martin's prop people spent the five-week election campaign carting a backdrop around the country that highlighted the fundamental promise of a Martin victory: "Shorter Waiting Times." Does his tenure in office depend on delivering on that promise, and delivering now?

> **Canadians may not have the patience to watch yet another gathering end in bickering, backstabbing and finger pointing**

One assumes that not only Ottawa's health care policy wonks, but also the Prime Minister's political strategists have had a busy summer trying to concoct the plan that will generate support across the land and, at the same time, be embraced by his fellow first ministers. The stakes are high—Canadians may not have the patience to watch yet another gathering of the country's top political leaders end in bickering, backstabbing and finger pointing. At least that's the suggestion coming from Roy Romanow—the man who recommended more spending, in what now seems like a generation ago (actually it was in November 2002), as the way out of the health care crisis. The urgency still remains and so does the question: can the country's elected leaders find common ground and produce a solution for the entire country? Not since Meech Lake in 1990 and its infamous week of closed door meetings has there been a gathering where there has been as much pressure for a deal that everyone can buy into. As Canadians we like to brag about the so called "great Canadian compromise." Trouble is, we seem to be getting further and further away from a time when we actually achieved one on a major issue. Will one be created this time?

Perhaps then it's fitting that we borrow that U.S. presidential wisdom and Canadianize it, because it's probably fair to say that Martin's minority government "doesn't really begin until after the Labour Day weekend." The summer has been a chance to regroup—for all parties, actually—and now the real action is about to begin. M

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: letters@macleans.ca

FaceTime



Old Bess
An updated, much softer portrait of Queen Elizabeth II—her image also forming the ghostly watermark visible when the note is turned to the light—is one of a batch of anti-counterfeit measures on the new $20 bill. On the back, the loon is gone, replaced by a series of mythical Haida figures by artist Bill Reid.

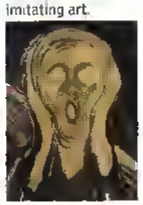


Osama's driver
Salim Ahmed Hamdan—one of Osama bin Laden's drivers in Afghanistan in the months surrounding Sept. 11—is the first of four Guantánamo inmates to be tried by a secretive American military tribunal not used since the Second World War. A 34-year-old Yemeni, Hamdan says he earned a pittance chauffeuring bin Laden, knew nothing about terrorist attacks and just ran errands.



Maggie's son
South African prosecutors charged Mark Thatcher, the 51-year-old businessman son of the former British PM, with helping finance an alleged coup in oil-rich Equatorial Guinea. Seventy accused mercenaries, most of them South Africans but a few of them ex-British soldiers, were nabbed in March when their plane was stopped in Harare. Thatcher denies any involvement in the plot.

Screaming
So, two thieves waving handguns terrify Oslo museum goers and grab Edvard Munch's *The Scream* (there are four versions in all, two now stolen), a painting famous for depicting a world mad with alienation and violence. No ransom demands are made. Just another case of life imitating art.



CLOCKW SE FROM TOP: BANK OF CANADA; CHRIS YOUNG/PA PHOTO; MUNCH MUSEUM/AP; NEAL KATYAL/AP

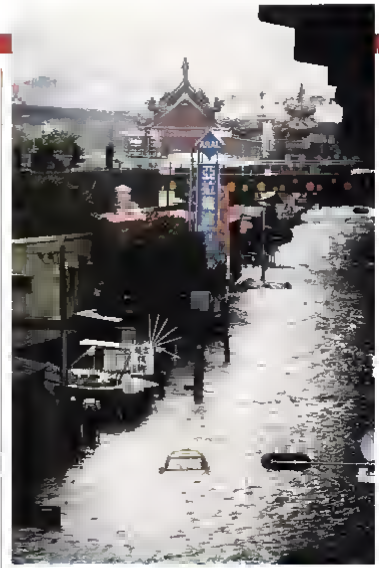
WORLD

PRISONER ABUSE A U.S. army report found at least 35 military intelligence officers and civilian personnel were part of the abuse scandal at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison earlier this year—a much higher participation by **senior intelligence officers** than was previously admitted. The report said 27 active participants should face charges, up from seven currently before a tribunal.

Earlier, an independent panel led by former defence secretary James Schlesinger attributed the abuse to a string of failures reaching **right up to the Pentagon.** The panel did not recommend that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld resign—but presidential challenger John Kerry did.

RUSSIAN PLANES Chechen rebels disavowed responsibility, but Russia suspected terrorism as two passenger planes crashed 800 km apart but within two minutes of each other, killing 89 people. Security officials found **traces of an explosive** in one of the crashes, which came just days before presidential elections in strife-torn Chechnya, where Islamic rebels are trying to escape Moscow's grasp.

GAY MARRIAGE In a striking break with George W. Bush—and just days before the start of the Republican convention in New York City—U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney said he feels it should be up to the states, not Washington, to define the constitutional nature of marriage. Cheney also noted he is enormously proud of his gay daughter.



WET WORLD The streets of San Chong, Taiwan, drain slowly in the calm after the big blow. At least 35 were killed as a deadly tropical storm, with winds gusting to 175 km/h, rampaged through the Philippines, Taiwan and China, where it destroyed upwards of 10,000 homes.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS A trainload of U.S. seniors riding what they called the Rx Express made a three-day journey from California to Vancouver to purchase cheaper medications and protest U.S. restrictions on buying Canadian drugs over the Internet.

Meanwhile, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich moved ahead with plans to set up an online clearing house to help that state's residents buy prescriptions from Canada, Britain and Ireland. And a group of California pharmacists sued several large drug-makers, alleging **price-fixing** on popular brands.

GAZA Palestinian gunmen ambushed **Yasser Arafat's intelligence chief,** wounding him and killing two bodyguards as the internal power struggle continued between reformers and old-guard Arafat cronies.

Israel, meanwhile, approved **1,800** new housing units in the disputed West Bank, fuelling Palestinian and **international anger.** It also sent troops back into Gaza after militants fired crude rockets at an Israeli town.

LOCUSTS A swarm of locusts almost **like a Biblical plague** crossed the Mediterranean to Italy after devouring their way through three countries in North Africa. The oversized insects descended on tourist spots including

BY MAXIME BIGRAS



BY THE NUMBERS

LOVE THAT BOSS?

If so, you're not alone. Just in time for Labour Day, we bring you a Rogers Media poll that finds working Canadians have surprisingly few complaints on the job front.

	%
Satisfied with boss	83
Includes very satisfied	51
Satisfied with job	90
Includes very satisfied	54
Support end to mandatory retirement	66
Actually wish to work past 65	45

SOURCE: POLLARA INC., SAMPLE SIZE 1,203, MARGIN OF ERROR ± 2.7 %

WALLY SANTANA/AP

the town of Matera, where Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* was filmed

ENVIRONMENT In a notable about-face, the U S seems to be revising its official view of global warming and is no longer blaming it on trees A new government report says carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping man-made gases are the only likely explanation for global warming in recent decades

STARDUST NASA's Genesis probe spent over two years trapping some of the universe's more exquisite solar particles in lattices of silicon and sapphire. NASA wants to snag the 204-kg capsule, now hurtling homeward, in mid-air so its precious cargo won't scatter on impact. Two helicopter stunt pilots from Hollywood have been practising for the job Their real date with stars is Sept 8

CANADA

WIRETAPS Canada's police chiefs asked Ottawa for new laws to help them monitor Internet and cellphone communications Arguing current wiretap rules are outdated, the chiefs also want Internet providers to maintain large caches of data for long periods, and to provide free access to police using search warrants, to assist investigations

CHOI-FM Quebec's controversial shock jock radio station, ordered to close at the end of August, was granted a reprieve of sorts. Ottawa's regulator agreed it can stay on the air at least until the spring, while a court challenge is being heard



WEST NILE Canada's blood collection agency is performing extra screening on donated blood from Toronto, Winnipeg and southern Saskatchewan now that these areas have reported real or probable cases of West Nile virus in humans

WHALE SONG A wayward humpback whale shut down Nova Scotia's Bay of Fundy generating station for days when he followed a school of herring through the sluice gates and seemed to be having too much fun cavorting for humans in the Annapolis River Officials were thinking of playing whale feeding noises to lure him out to sea

INFLATION Canada's inflation rate dipped in July to 2 3 per cent, down from 2 5 a month earlier Still, because prices are rising for basics like electricity and insurance, analysts expect the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates in September The big banks raised mortgage rates a fifth of a point

PEACEKEEPING Two incidents that killed three Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan could not have been prevented, National Defence investigations concluded The deaths were due to a suicide bomber and a land mine The reports rejected criticism the lightly armoured Iltis vehicle was unsuitable

BANKRUPTCY A restructured Air Canada was given judicial permission to fly out of bankruptcy protection at the end of September And a different corporate giant is now seeking similar help JTI-Macdonald Corp , makers of Export A cigarettes and other brands, was granted court protection after the Quebec government demanded immediate payment of $1 4 billion in past taxes and penalties on Canadian-made cigarettes that were being smuggled back into the country The tobacco giant is being sued by Ottawa for a similar amount

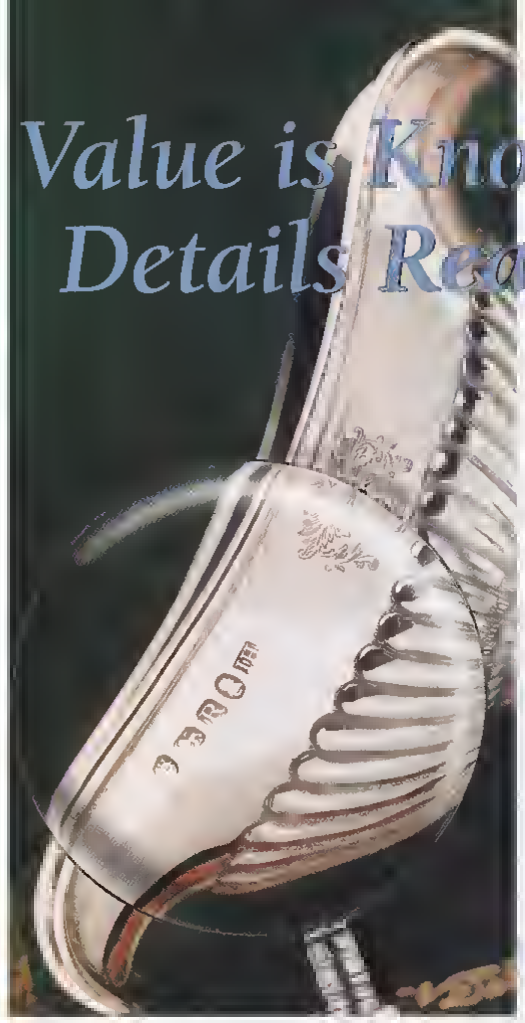
STAMPED *Maclean's* turns 100 in the fall of 2005, and to honour the occasion Canada Post will offer a commemorative stamp in the spring, the design to be announced



JAMMED UP

His gun had become jammed—though police didn't know it at the time—and so likely was his mind, psychiatrists said afterward. Locked in a raging domestic dispute, 45-year-old Sugston Brookes fired two shots at his estranged wife in a downtown food court and beat her with the sawed-off rifle. Then, when police closed in, he grabbed a young bank clerk hostage outside Union Station, one of Toronto's busiest commuter junctions, in morning rush hour. Forty minutes later, just after this photo was taken, he was shot dead by a police sniper.

ANDY KLEVORN/LUDINGTON DAILY NEWS/AP; CBC NEWS/CP



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Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



TALKING GUNS AND BUTTER

Defence policy is too important to be left to the bureaucrats—bring in the public

DEFENCE ADVOCATES are creeping these days amid Ottawa's grumpily unsummered politicians. And the pleading is especially insistent around Defence Minister Bill Graham. The beleaguered minister is in a no-win situation. Paul Martin seems prepared to deliver on his promise to add 5,000 army troops, and now Graham must scrounge funds to afford them. Worse, the PM launched a long overdue review of foreign and defence policy last December, before his majority evaporated into a minority. Now, those bureaucratic and almost certainly controversial studies are ready for fall publication. But Martin has yet to decide whether to allow public hearings on them.

The Liberals are in a mess. The logical approach would have been to determine our foreign and security policy—and then tailor defence policy accordingly. Instead, the Liberals unveiled a security policy this spring with an extra $690 million for everything from threat assessment to port safety. Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs bureaucrats worked quietly with public servants from Defence, Trade and Finance, concocting an international policy review. In effect, despite the odd town hall public meeting, it was a closed shop: even former foreign affairs minister Lloyd Axworthy has argued that officials have only pleased themselves.

> "The logical approach would be to first determine our foreign and national security policy—and then tailor accordingly"

The distress is even deeper among defence experts. They fear Graham will simply table the defence report as official policy. Or that he will ask both the Commons and Senate defence committees to hold public hearings that would only consider the document's recommendations. (The Grits are tapping the Senate because they don't want too many MPs out of town on fact-finding missions if there is a confidence vote.) Instead, those experts want Graham to ask the committees to produce reports that would essentially establish defence policy for the next decade. (The 1994 policy is pitifully out of date—if only because it predated the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.)

It is hard to disagree with the need for broader scope. True, as cynics point out, the more you study a topic, the less you actually have to do. And the armed forces desperately need new equipment such as transport aircraft. But vital foreign policy and defence decisions should not be left to bureaucrats—especially in these troubled times. Surely, there should be full hearings to ask if values matter in international relations. And, surely, officials should not be the only ones to decide how we station and deploy troops for domestic security. "Until now, we have had an armed forces that was oriented to fighting elsewhere," says Senate defence committee chairman Colin Kenny, who advocates public hearings. "Obviously, we would prefer to start from scratch. But we have to get on with it—because so many decisions are being delayed."

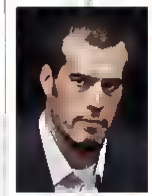
Public input matters. Take the reserves: 15,500 soldiers in 130 army units across the nation—with plans to add another 3,000 by 2006. Advocates such as the non-profit Reserves 2000 say this militia would make a superb mobilization base for homeland security—and cost less to maintain than regular troops. They add that Defence should trim its top-heavy bureaucracy if it wants to save money. However, the defence review will likely disregard proposals to add even more reserve troops. Surely, the public should mull such issues. And, surely, Graham should crane beyond his officials to hear them.

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer. mary.janigan@macleans.rogers.com

Passages

DIED Daniel Petrie, the Nova Scotia-born filmmaker who directed hits as diverse as *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Fort Apache, the Bronx*, and fathered a clan of cinematic achievers, died at his Hollywood home of cancer. He was 83. His semi-autobiographical Canadian film *The Bay Boy* won six Genies in 1985.

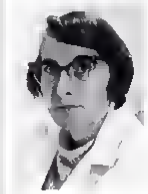
PLEADED Todd Bertuzzi, the 29 year old Vancouver Canuck forward whose sucker punch during a March 8 NHL game stunned the hockey world and landed Colorado



forward Steve Moore in hospital with a broken neck, pleaded not guilty to assault in a Vancouver court. He was charged on June 24 and faces a maximum penalty of 18 months in jail.

SELECTED The *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest newspaper, has a new editor. Giles Gherson was spirited away from the rival *Globe and Mail*, where he had been editor of its Report on Business since January. A long-time business and political writer, Gherson was also editor of the *Edmonton Journal*. He replaces John Honderich, who was editor and publisher and the last working member of the Star's five founding families.

DIED Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the compassionate, Swiss-born psychiatrist who wrote *On Death and Dying* and transformed the language of death, passed away at her home in Scottsdale, Ariz. She was 78 and best known for describing what she termed the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.



NOMINATED Two first-time Canadian novelists—long-time *Maclean's* contributor John Bemrose and South African-born writer and artist Lewis DeSoto—are among the 22 nominees for Britain's prestigious Man Booker literary prize. Bemrose wrote *The Island Walkers*, DeSoto *A Blade of Grass*.

CHUCK STODDY/CP- AP



U.S. Elections | Diana Kerry

WOOING EXPATS FOR THE 'TALL SKINNY GUY'

IF NOTHING ELSE, the 2000 U S presidential election reinforced the hoary cliché that "every vote counts." George W Bush took office after a contentious win in Florida by just 537 votes In the current campaign, Republicans and Democrats are both straining to tap the more than four million Americans who live abroad Leading the Democratic effort is Diana Kerry, a teacher and linguist who is also the younger sister of presidential candidate John Kerry As chairwoman of Americans Overseas for Kerry-Edwards, she recently visited Canada to woo the 680,000 Americans living here—the second-largest expat community after Mexico. She insists her brother is more loveable than many may believe

The presidential race is a dead heat now. Could American expats be a deciding factor?
It's certainly possible. Many states last time were won by just a few thousand votes

Do you find Americans living abroad more motivated to vote this time around?
Absolutely I've met people who haven't voted in 20 years but say they will this time They see the United States moving in the wrong direction

Presumably Iraq is a big factor.
It's huge We've dissipated the world's sympathy and support after 9/11 and made a lot of people angry. It's because of the unilateral and arrogant approach to world affairs demonstrated by President Bush

Would President Kerry be good for Canada?
He would be good for the world. My brother is someone who listens and would work within the framework of international law and diplomacy He gets criticized for being able to see more than one perspective I think that's a real strength.

He's also often described as aloof and patrician. How does that square with the John Kerry you know?
It surprises me to see those adjectives used. You know, he's a tall skinny guy who on TV is a little less able to look soft and jolly because of his angularity But we saw how he connected with people in the primary campaign. On this watch, you may not want the guy you can sit down and have a beer with

What were dinnertime conversations like in the Kerry household when you were kids?
We grew up as expatriates ourselves My father was in the foreign service, so that sparked an interest and conversation We saw Europe in the 1950s, the recovery of a continent from the devastation of war That obviously shaped John's character and led to his conviction that you don't go to war because you want to but only as a very last resort

Do you expect your brother to be demonized at the Republican convention?
The Republicans have vowed to make John an object of derision They can't run on their record, so they will use their airtime to deride my brother. I think that's very sad

BRIAN BERGMAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHAL STILES

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WRITING A NEW Rx

Martin has had to doctor his catchy prescriptions for curing the health care system, writes JOHN GEDDES

IF WATCHING the Olympics got Canadians used to having their hopes dashed, the ability to shrug off a letdown could come in handy when the Prime Minister and provincial premiers hold their Sept. 13-15 health care summit. Back in the spring election campaign, Paul Martin promised voters he would convene the meeting and settle for nothing less than "reforms that will fix medicare for a generation." He vowed the First Ministers wouldn't leave the table until they had hammered out "a long-term plan for a health care system that is properly funded, clearly sustainable and significantly reformed." But that sort of 1-guarantee-a gold medal bluster has given way to we'll-give-it-our-best-shot realism. "If it's going to take two meetings, three meetings, four meetings, that's what it will take," Martin hedged last week. As they said in Athens, there's always Beijing.



The CMA's Schumacher

Federal Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh is also playing down any need for a breakthrough of the sort Liberals talked up during the election. "To suggest if we don't have a deal in mid-September that's satisfactory to all of us, or a deal at all, that somehow the federation will fall apart, I'm not of that view," Dosanjh told *Maclean's*. Doctors and health policy experts are not surprised that the hot air is being taken out of the inflated expectations for the Ottawa summit. What ails the health system doesn't lend itself to campaign-trail prescriptions. Cut waiting times, boost home care, control drug costs, reform the way family physicians and hospital emergency rooms provide basic services--it's too much to expect it all to be accomplished by a single act of political will. "I don't think you're ever going to get that watershed moment," says University of Toronto health policy professor Raisa Deber.

Yet delivering such a moment is precisely what Martin ran for re-election on. So far, the provinces aren't making it easy for him to even partly deliver. They're asking Ottawa to take over their plans that cover some prescription drug costs, a $12-billion a year burden that Martin and Dosanjh are refusing to accept. Even worse, Alberta's Ralph Klein, who favours a shift to more private care, has declared he will attend only one day of the three-day summit, clearly slighting the Prime Minister. Martin's best hope for salvaging something from the meeting may be to lock down at least verbal support from the premiers on his signature issue, shrinking waiting times. Under the campaign slogan "five in five," the Liberals said they would spend $4 billion to achieve major reductions in waiting times over five years in five areas: cancer, heart disease, diagnostic imaging, joint replacements, and sight restoration.



FRANK GUNN/CP

Among key promises: shorter waiting times for cancer treatment

Setting clear goals, with deadlines attached, is a strategy Martin made work for him when he was a finance minister bent on beating the federal deficit. But seeing what's wrong with a balance sheet is easier than sorting out which health problems most urgently need attention. Many who actually deliver services have doubts about the Prime Minister's tidy to-do list. "It creates two tiers of services. Everything's insured, but these five things are special," says Dr. Albert Schumacher, a Windsor, Ont., family physician and the Canadian Medical Association's new president. "Mr. Martin could have picked them out of his back pocket."

Maybe not quite that randomly. Long waits for Martin's big five have gotten a lot of bad publicity. But other services will get left behind if new funding is earmarked for only a few high-profile concerns. Consider psychiatric care for children: studies show it's in alarmingly short supply in both Canada and the U.S. The Canadian Psychiatric Association recommends one child psychiatrist for every 3,800 children and youths, and while there are no exact national figures, the association points to Ontario's ratio of one child psychiatrist for every 36,356 kids and adolescents as "grossly inadequate." Young people's anguish, however, doesn't get much play in the political arena. "Mental health isn't like heart surgery--it isn't sexy," says Schumacher. "It hasn't had big overarching strategies or national vision."

In fact, national vision on waiting times is hard to come by even in the areas that do attract scrutiny. Controlling access to high-demand health services is notoriously difficult, and there are few notable success stories. But the Cardiac Care Network of Ontario is often cited as one. Long waits for heart surgery in Ontario in the late 1980s, and the deaths of patients waiting for operations, led to the establishment of the network in 1990. It links 17 cardiac care centres in the province, tracking 75,000 procedures a year. Patients can check out the wait times at different hospitals on a website, and are given the option of travelling for quicker care. Still, after 14 years of coordination on a scale unmatched in North America, the network hasn't eliminated waits: about 70 per cent of patients get treatment within the recommended times. But Dr. Kevin Glasgow, the network's CEO, suggests the fairness it provides is as important as its speed. "Patients appreciate that there's a system to ensure equity," Glasgow says. "It's not a matter of who you know or how rich you are."

There are no such assurances for most Canadians waiting for care. On the other hand, many seem satisfied: a recent Statistics Canada survey found that 87 per cent reported no difficulty accessing elective surgery and 79 per cent had no trouble arranging to see a specialist. And beyond limited studies and anecdotes, there's no way to assess how bad things are for that minority who run into problems. "We don't have anything approaching good data on waiting times, and until we do, we can't fix it," says Sam Shortt, director of Queen's University's Centre for Health Services and Policy Research. Yet the federal government vows not only to create that missing national data on waiting times, but to push ahead reforms to shrink them, and make sure they don't vary widely from province to province. "We want there to be certain benchmarks across the country on wait times, and ensure that all Canadians get the care they need without having to wait unreasonable times anywhere," Dosanjh declares.

Some experts are skeptical major progress can be accomplished in five years. Just training the needed doctors and some of the specialized nurses and technicians can take longer than that. And since health is primarily a provincial jurisdiction, setting and enforcing national standards will be hard. What if a province decides to tackle, say, hip and knee replacement first, and put less emphasis on cataract surgery? Or disagrees with Martin's plan entirely and prefers to spend more on home care for the elderly? It's hard to imagine the federal government insisting on its priorities.

The only way to maintain uniformity would be to refuse federal funding to provinces going their own way. And according to Dosanjh, Ottawa won't be that inflexible. The five federal priorities, he says, "aren't etched in stone. If some province finds that there are another five areas, or three they want to concentrate on, and they can demonstrate that need, then so be it." But in that case, "five in five" appears to be less a firm commitment than catchphrase--and the notion of coast-to-coast standards on waiting times for key services looks unlikely to be achieved. That would not surprise those who know the system best, and are used to thinking in provincial rather than national terms. "National standards and coordination will be difficult," says Glasgow. "We have 10 provincial systems."

The real pressure on provinces to cut waiting times may come less from Martin than from sick citizens who have grown angry waiting for treatment. Last spring, fed up patients in Saskatchewan, with the help of the

BAYNE STANLEY/CP

opposition Saskatchewan Party, went public to put pressure on the province's NDP government. Among them was John Barnsley, 52, a farmer from near Assiniboia, who protested having to wait several months for surgery to remove a tumour that had grown where his cancerous left kidney was removed seven years earlier. A surgeon in Saskatoon finally cut out the malignant tumour last April 28. "That only occurred because we went to the legislature and raised a ruckus," says Barnsley. Adds his wife, Joan: "In my mind, we wasted a whole bunch of valuable time for no good reason. You can imagine the terror we were living under."

SEEING what's wrong with a balance sheet is easier than sorting out which health problems most need attention

Stories of that sort put another kind of terror in the hearts of politicians. In the wake of the uproar, the Saskatchewan government boosted health spending 6.3 per cent, to about 44 per cent of provincial spending, in its March 31 budget. But provincial Finance Minister Harry Van Mulligen also warned that such hikes can't continue year after year. "This is simply not sustainable. We need to find new ways to achieve our goals." Provinces across the country make the same complaint. A Conference Board of Canada study projected that by 2020 health will eat up 44 per cent of all the taxes and other revenues collected by the provinces, up from 37 per cent in 2003. Even more ominously, the report noted, the demographic bulge of baby boomers aging into seniors will come after 2020—so pressure to spend more can only get worse.

At least some more money is on the way from Ottawa. Martin has promised to boost health transfers to the provinces, though by how much and how quickly will be a matter for hard bargaining. Meanwhile, Dosanjh urges toning down the apocalyptic talk of a system on the verge of collapse. He stresses that by the broadest measure of health spending—how much of the overall economy it consumes—Canada is in the middle of the pack among developed nations. "To continue to say health care is unsustainable adds to the erosion in public confidence in our system," he says. "We're not spending inordinate amounts on it." Welcome words, no doubt, for anyone who fears for the future of universal health care. And if medicare isn't in critical condition, maybe it doesn't need the miracle cure promised last year on the campaign trail after all. M

EXAMINING HEALTH CARE, BY THE NUMBERS

How much does health cost Canada?
$121 billion in 2003.

How fast is that cost growing?
Conference Board of Canada forecast to 2020: 2.6% a year after inflation.

How does Canada compare internationally?
Average OECD health spending in 2001: 8.4% of GDP; Canada, 9.7%; U.S., 13.9%.

Why does the system seem underfunded?
We're still playing catch-up from the federal deficit fight: health funding from 1992 to 1996 would have had to grow 17% to keep up with inflation and population. Instead, per capita, health funding fell slightly.

How much more should Ottawa give the provinces?
To close the funding gap identified in the Roy Romanow report, about $3 billion more a year (the 2004-2005 cash transfers to provinces and territories were $35.5 billion).

What else might cost big money?
The Canadian Medical Association has called for a $1-billion federal fund to train more doctors. Liberals promised $4 billion to cut waiting times and $2 billion for home care, along with a catastrophic drug plan, and primary care reform.

'MY GOD, IT'S HEALTH'

Public health care is not expensive, says the new federal minister

UJJAL DOSANJH was standing in front of a restaurant just off Parliament Hill on the morning of July 19 when Paul Martin called him on his cellphone to offer him a job in cabinet. Making small talk, the Prime Minister began by asking his new star British Columbia MP what he was doing. When Dosanjh said he was about to buy breakfast, Martin joked, "You go tell them that if they don't give you good food you can have them condemned by the Health Department." Dosanjh's reaction: "Oh, my God, it's Health."

No wonder the former NDP premier of British Columbia, who jumped to the Liberals just before the spring election, was daunted by the prospect. Martin had made health his big policy push in the campaign. He promised historic change—even though the provinces are not eager to play ball. His health minister would have one of the most closely watched jobs in Ottawa. But Dosanjh, 56, is a tough politician. As B.C. premier in 2000, he broke with other premiers to defend national health standards—no doubt one reason Martin wanted him for the job. Dosanjh spoke with *Maclean's* about the task at hand.

What sort of deal with the provinces would satisfy your push for reform?

It's very clearly outlined in our platform. Wait times, home care, accountability—I believe those are three elements. And of course pharmacare, with respect to catastrophic drug costs. However, to argue that we should take over pharmacare, as [the provinces] have suggested, would be about a $12-billion-a-year venture. That's $60 billion over five years. If we do that we will not be able to do any of the reforms. Then we are into a real danger zone for the survival of our health care system.

Shortening waiting times is your government's stated top priority. But does anybody really know how to do it?

I've read comments from Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, saying he doesn't have the data on wait times to say how bad or good they are. I think that's true. That's why in fact we're looking for accountability, we're looking for information that's available on a comparable basis across the country in all of the jurisdictions.

How serious is the threat to public health care as costs increase?

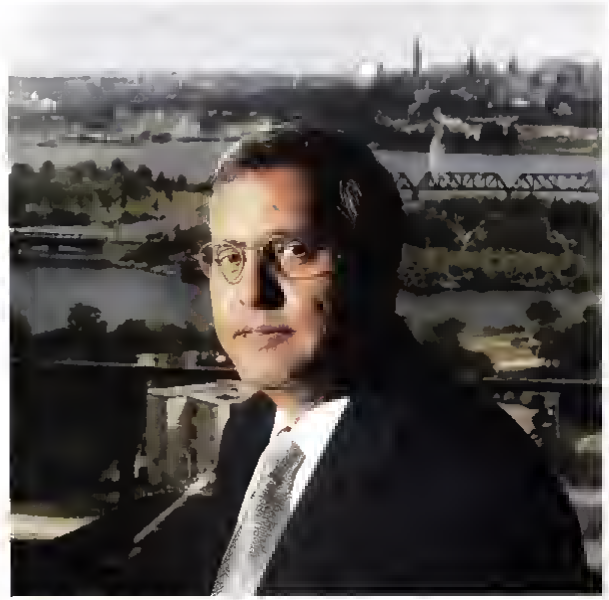
If you look at the percentage of gross domestic product that we spend on health care, Canada is somewhere in the middle. If we're able to create efficiencies, make sure that we're accountable, have home care instead of hospital beds occupied by people who could be at home, we would save money at the end of the day. Public health care is sustainable—public health care is not expensive.

Where do you stand on for-profit services, particularly MRI clinics?

I'm not an ideologue on these things. There are private MRI clinics—I'm not running out to shut them down. There are two things I'm worried about: user fees and jumping queues. Covered services should not have fees attached to them. It's our obligation to make sure that's not done. And it's our obligation to see that people with fat wallets are not able to jump the queue by getting some procedures done in private facilities, and then being able to jump the queue for rehab and other things. If we expand public health care the need for private services might disappear.

In 1985, an extremist attacked you with an iron bar after you spoke out against militant Sikhs in Vancouver. What was your own hospital experience like?

They looked after my head very quickly, because that was the most important part—I had 84 stitches in two layers. Then they had to operate on my hand to rejoin my fingers. I waited 48 hours before they could get the operating space. It took an hour to do it, but I had to wait that 48 hours. And it's gotten worse now. M



PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL GRIMSHAW-ABACA/CP

THE PRICE OF A PRIVATE SYSTEM

While Canadians worry about the future of public health insurance, Americans are waking up to the economic price of their private system. Some economists blame the U.S. failure to generate jobs this year on a steady rise in employee health insurance costs—to an average of US$3,000 a year per worker. Companies are reluctant to hire new employees and pay those hefty premiums. In the second quarter of this year, U.S. health benefit costs soared 8.1 per cent, more than three times the inflation rate. Big corporations familiar with the situation on both sides of the border often view the Canadian model, in which government picks up the health insurance tab, as a big advantage. General Motors has said universal medicare shaves several dollars an hour off the cost of labour in Canada.



It's a point that advocates of sustaining universality have picked up on. University of Toronto health policy professor Raisa Deber argues that those who suggest more medical services should be paid for outside provincial insurance plans—among them the Alberta government—are failing to consider the fact that *somebody* will have to pay. "In a lot of cases, it's going to be businesses' benefits plans," Deber said. "And that's not exactly a saving." The debate could be highlighted in this fall's U.S. presidential election. "It's bad enough that skyrocketing health care costs are squeezing family budgets," Democrat nominee John Kerry has said. "Now we have new evidence that the spiralling cost of health care is costing us jobs." Defenders of the Canadian health model have always emphasized national values. Now the job-creation factor is bringing questions about smart economic policy back into the debate, too. J.G.

WE'RE IN THE MONEY

Alberta is about to be debt-free. So what should Ralph Klein do with the freed-up funds?

We're in the money, come on, my honey,
Let's spend it, lend it, send it rolling along!

ONE CAN ALMOST imagine Ralph Klein humming that Depression-era ditty as he does his daily treadmill workout in the basement gym at Alberta's legislature building. And who could blame him? Thanks to soaring oil and natural gas prices, the provincial treasury is bursting with surplus dollars. Albetra recently revised its projected royalty revenues for the current fiscal year to over $8 billion—nearly double the figure forecast in last spring's budget—and announced that the bulk of the resource windfall will go to retire the province's outstanding $3.7-billion debt. That will make Alberta the first debt-free province in more than three decades, a goal Klein has doggedly pursued since becoming premier in 1992. What's more, it's all coming together just prior to a provincial election, widely expected this fall, not to mention the celebration of Alberta's centenary as a province in 2005. Wouldn't that make you want to break out in song?

For an encore of sorts, Klein is urging Albertans to engage in a public debate over what exactly should be done with the freed-up money. A survey asking for suggestions will appear in mailboxes across the province this week. Among the options the premier has already floated: lowering taxes, issuing annual dividends to every Alberta resident, socking more away in the provincial piggy bank (otherwise known as the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, now standing at $12.4 billion), or spending more on a variety of services and infrastructure needs.

It's an exercise bound to rankle many outside Alberta. For one thing, all other provincial governments remain heavily in the red (accumulated debt loads range from $1.3 billion in tiny Prince Edward Island to a whopping $142 billion in Ontario), and struggle to provide basic services without running up annual deficits. For another, Albertans already pay no provincial sales tax and enjoy the lowest overall tax burden in the country.

But before resentment sets in too deeply, it should be acknowledged that Alberta's robust fiscal health is not due solely to the good fortune of sitting atop massive oil and gas fields. When Klein took over, he inherited a $22.7-billion debt and $3.2-billion annual budget deficit from his Conservative predecessor, Donald Getty. Klein eliminated the deficit in two years, and went on to tackle the debt. To his credit, he rejected the more radical approach taken by Ontario's Mike Harris; there were no significant tax cuts in Alberta until the deficit was gone. But, in the early years, Klein's spending cuts were sweeping and, in some cases, draconian. Provincial transfers to cities and towns plunged by 78 per cent. Several key departments, including health, education and social services, took hits of between 12 and 30 per cent. Classroom sizes swelled, hospitals closed and thousands of civil servants had their wages rolled back—or lost their jobs entirely.

So there has been plenty of collective pain to get Alberta to its state of fiscal bliss. The question now is: who stands to gain?

There are already some obvious winners. Spending on health and education has been on the rise again for years. Since March alone, the Klein Tories have hiked funding in these two areas by a total of $1.7 billion, money that will help pay for more hospital beds and teachers. Starting on Oct. 1, Alberta seniors will no longer have to pay provincial health care premiums—a $93 million a year concession. Expect more largesse in the coming weeks. Municipalities are pressing hard—and with just cause—for a bigger share of the province's surplus. Alberta ranchers, devastated by the mad cow crisis, can also look forward to another hefty compensation package before the writ is dropped.

The choices I may from lowering to spending more a variety of services

But one constituency that continues to be forgotten—as has been the case for the last 12 years—is Alberta's poor. Some of the harshest cuts Klein made in the early 1990s came at the expense of the province's least fortunate residents. Welfare rates were slashed by around 20 per cent. The government decreed that "employable" welfare residents—by which it meant nearly everyone but the severely handicapped—must seek job retraining or risk losing their benefits. Tens of thousands were struck from the welfare rolls. Some fled to British Columbia, where monthly welfare payments were significantly higher, clutching one-way bus tickets supplied by Alberta social services.

Unlike other government departments, the social services cuts were not restored once the fiscal storm passed. Today, Canada's richest province boasts some of the lowest social assistance rates in the country. A single parent with one child gets $730 a month. The maximum benefit for someone with a severe disability—by definition, a person who is virtually unemployable—is $850. This spring, the government announced a revamped welfare policy that includes modest increases in health and child-support benefits for some recipients who take job training, but no hikes in monthly living allowances. The new policy is dubbed "Alberta Works."

That moniker provides a broad hint of the government's operating philosophy on this file. I once asked Klein what he thought of critics who said he was balancing the books on the backs of the disenfranchised. "I have a lot of compassion for people who are on low incomes, including people on welfare," he told me. "But I also have a lot



JEFF MCINTOSH/CP

of sympathy for the so-called working poor—those people who will take a job, whether it's doing dishes or flipping burgers, and will do what they can to upgrade their skills."

It's a noble sentiment, but one that's undercut by his own government's policies. The legislated minimum wage in Alberta—the sort that people "doing dishes or flipping burgers" earn—is $5.90 an hour. That's the lowest in the country, and it has inched up only 90 cents during Klein's tenure. This at a time when Alberta's inflation rate leads the nation. Homeless shelters, food banks and soup kitchens are all doing a brisk business and, increasingly, deal with people who are employed, but simply can't make ends meet. "We're seeing working poor who can't afford their rents," says Marjorie Benez, executive director of the Edmonton Food Bank. "We also have people on welfare who don't even have enough to buy a bus pass to look for work."

THE FISCAL health is a result of more than energy revenues—there's been a lot of collective pain due to spending cuts

One reason the poor get neglected is that there's so little political pressure to do otherwise. The Klein government's own polling shows that welfare cuts have never been a big issue for the majority of Albertans. That's a reality Nicola Fairbrother understands all too well. "Spending money on health and education—that's election-winning stuff," says Fairbrother, executive director of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, a charitable organization that speaks on behalf of the poor. "There's a strong middle class constituency who are able to comment on that. It's different for the poor. It's hard to be a good advocate when you're trying to figure out how to feed your kids to the end of the month."

So when Albertans receive Klein's questionnaire about what to do with all the surplus bucks, they might spare a thought for the less fortunate in their midst. It's a rich province that truly knows how to take care of its own. M

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SEPARATISM, ALBERTA-STYLE

"Is Alberta always to be in a state of tutelage to the East? Yes, until she herself insists on equality of rights."
—Alwyn Bramley-Moore, 1911

"We'll always be on guard against the federal government intruding into our good fortune and trying to take advantage of it."
—Ralph Klein, 2004

Chances are, only one of these men means anything to you. But, in fact, Alberta's feisty premier is indebted, in more ways than one, to Bramley-Moore, an Englishman who served briefly (1909-1913) as a member of the Alberta legislature and authored *Canada and Her Colonies or Home Rule for Alberta*. The book, published in 1911, was a spirited denunciation of how Ottawa had granted provincehood to Alberta six years earlier. Bramley-Moore's chief complaint—one shared by a majority of Albertans at the time—was that the fledgling province had been denied control over its own lands and the natural resources beneath them. Instead, Ottawa retained ownership and paid Alberta a nominal annual subsidy, a practice Bramley-Moore mocked as "a veritable fairy godmother heaping priceless treasures on some lucky orphan."

As a member of Alberta's first (and, as it turned out, only) Liberal government, Bramley Moore introduced a resolution demanding Ottawa transfer ownership over Crown lands to the province. An amended form of that motion passed unanimously, sparking a long and protracted struggle that culminated in 1930 when the federal government finally agreed to give Alberta, along with Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the same rights other provinces had enjoyed since entering Confederation. By that point, Bramley-Moore, who had been killed by a sniper's bullet during the First World War, was a figure largely lost to history. But the cause he championed ensured the prosperity of future Alberta governments, including Klein's. Moreover, the Alberta-first stance Bramley-Moore staked out in *Canada and her Colonies* underscores the very deep roots of Albertans' enduring sense of alienation from Central Canada.



COURTESY OF GLADYS BRAMLEY-MOORE

Bramley-Moore's critique went well beyond the dispute over resource ownership. He bristled at the way protective tariffs benefited central Canadian businesses and forced western consumers to pay a premium for manufactured goods. "The present tariff," he wrote, "makes the West a private preserve for exploitation by eastern manufacturers." Presciently, Bramley-Moore warned how such inequities would foster regional strife: "Grievances after a time engender bitterness and hatred."

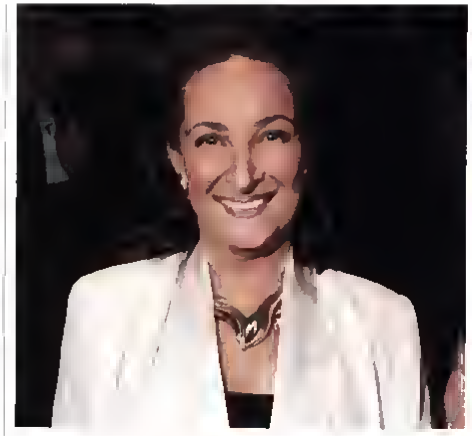
Like many Albertans who came after him, Bramley-Moore toyed with the idea of secession. He wrote that Alberta should "hoist the flag of independence, which would ipso facto make the province owner of her own resources. After a banquet or two and patriotic oratory, the province might express a desire to be reinstated in the Confederation—and then she would be in a position to make a bargain."

Ken Tingley, an Edmonton-based historical consultant who has studied Bramley-Moore's life and writings, says it remains unclear how serious the politician and author was about separatism. But what's fascinating is how Bramley-Moore's political views foreshadowed everything from the Reform party to the ongoing wrangling between Klein and Ottawa over the role the private sector should play in delivering health care. "Bramley-Moore was an early and very articulate advocate for the problems that exist in the Canadian federation from the Alberta perspective," says Tingley. And a reminder that, when it comes to western alienation, it's often a case of déjà vu all over again.

PASSING JUDGMENT

Critics lambaste the review process for the PM's Supreme Court nominations

IT WOULD HAVE been quite a show. Justice Rosalie Abella of the Ontario Court of Appeal, long a feminist hero and champion of minority rights and now Paul Martin's pick to fill one of two vacancies on the Supreme Court of Canada, squaring off on live TV against hostile Conservative MPs. Imagine the fireworks over gay marriage alone—Martin and Justice Minister Irwin Cotler apparently did. So instead of letting a committee of MPs and lawyers grill Abella and a second nominee, the less controversial Justice Louise Charron, also of the Ontario Court of Appeal, Cotler stood in for them. While it was the first time a justice minister has defended Supreme Court nominations before a committee, last week's hearing fell far short of the public scrutiny of judges many thought Martin meant to institute when he promised last year to let MPs review his choices. Court watchers couldn't help wondering how Abella might have fared speaking for herself. "I know Rosie," said Peter Russell, a University of Toronto political science professor emeritus. "She wouldn't have wilted."





RICHARD LAUTENS/TORONTO STAR; PAUL J. LAWRENCE

The justice minister spoke on behalf of Charron (above) and Abella, who is seen as a judicial activist

Martin's choice of Abella turned the heat way up in the debate over the review process. Her track record makes her a lightning rod for criticism, mostly from the political right, of so-called judicial activism. Appointed to the Ontario appeals bench in 1992, she wrote the landmark 1998 *Rosenberg* ruling that extended spousal benefits to gay couples. As author of a royal commission report on employment in 1984, she encouraged new policies to boost the hiring of women and minorities—an approach her critics say amounts to setting quotas. While she has many fans in the legal and academic establishments, there can be no denying that her appointment is politically charged, especially with the top court slated to consider the gay marriage question this fall. Abella and Charron both have track records that strongly suggest they will support Martin's plan to broaden the definition of matrimony to include same-sex couples.

Conservative MPs were careful, though, not to target Abella directly, saving their harshest criticism for the review process. The party's justice critic, former Manitoba attorney general Vic Toews, dismissed the committee as a "rubber stamp," and deputy leader Peter MacKay called the hearing with Cotler "window dressing." The Canadian Bar Association welcomed the appointments of Abella and Charron, but also called for "a more open process." The association recommends an advisory committee for appointing Supreme Court judges that would include parliamentarians, federal and provincial government officials, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and representatives of lawyers' groups. But Cotler did not hint at any openness to that idea, defending the tradition under which the justice minister consults judges, provincial attorneys general, and bar association and law society members on the choice. The ultimate power to make a selection rests solely with the Prime Minister. "I think they want to keep the power," Russell said of the government's reluctance to consider an advisory committee, "and that bothers me."

Cotler may yet consider tinkering with the system. But any change will come too late to affect the appointments of Abella and Charron. In Abella's case, a more public process would have showcased one of Canada's most accessible legal thinkers. She has described former chief justice Brian Dickson and justice Bertha Wilson, key figures on the Supreme Court in the era just after the adoption of the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as "the Fred and Ginger of the *Charter*, who choreographed some dazzling new routines." More seriously, Abella has dismissed it as "unrealistic to say that judges should not impose their values or make law." And she urges judges not to worry about public opinion. "Performing the task properly may mean controversy and criticism," she said in a speech last year in Dublin. "But better to court controversy than to court irrelevance, and better to court criticism than to court injustice." Shielded by the appointments system from having to answer criticism directly, Abella will now take her penchant for controversy to the Supreme Court of Canada. M

STRANGERS IN PARAGUAY

They came from Manitoba decades ago, but some Mennonites in this South American country still maintain their links to Canada, writes DAVID SAX

ON CUE, a chorus of voices unites in German under the guiding hand of the conductor, forming the harmonies of Schubert's *Mass in B flat*. The music filters out through the windows of the modern schoolroom, floating into the cool night of the Chaco desert. It's a moment of contrasts: the blond-haired, blue-eyed members of the choir have all been born and raised in this remote corner of Paraguay, are all native German speakers, and all are Mennonites. But they're also, for the most part, Canadian citizens.

Wedged between Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil, Paraguay remains a backwater country in a developing continent. But within its borders nearly 30,000 Mennonites are thriving, spread about the country in various agricultural communities. Some 8,200 are registered citizens of Canada—descendants of immigrants from southern Manitoba who began arriving in the 1920s after the province's school system started ordering them to teach the standard secular curriculum in French or English, but not their low-German dialect. With this threat to their culture, the Mennonites began looking elsewhere for suitable agrarian land in a place where they could practise their faith freely.

Around the same time, Paraguay was eager to settle the Chaco to guard against Bolivian encroachment. And so, in 1921, Mennonite scouts from Manitoba came here to inspect the hot, dry and thorny desert known as "the green hell." Six years later, over 1,700 Mennonites left the cold Canadian Prairie for an uncertain future in the heart of South America—although they never fully left Canada behind.

Sitting on his rooftop veranda overlooking the dusty streets of Loma Plata, the main town in the Chaco Mennonite colony of Menno, 82-year-old Bernhardt Penner, one of the original settlers, reminisces about that difficult period. "When we left Canada, we had the idea that there would be peanuts and oranges growing wild," he says. Instead, the Canadian immigrants had to clear and then irrigate the dry earth, only to have their work thrown into jeopardy when Bolivia invaded the Chaco in 1933. "I remember hearing the thunder of the artillery, first to the south, then the west," says Penner. "We got the message to evacuate, because the front was going to cross the village."

'WHEN we left Canada, we had the idea that there would be peanuts and oranges growing wild'

In the end, the war never touched them, and the settlers managed to erect, as they say, a "garden in the wilderness." Spread out over 650,000 hectares, the formerly uninhabitable Chaco was transformed into an agricultural oasis with four main settlements: Menno, Sommerfeld, Bergthal and Tres Palmas. Of the nearly 9,000 Mennonites living there now, just under half are Canadian. Cattle and dairy cows graze on expansive ranches, while other fields yield cotton and peanuts. But Menno is not a traditional Mennonite village of wagon wheels and hand plows. It is a modern economic zone where the residents drive new Toyotas and Mercedes, and enjoy far greater wealth than the average Paraguayan.



The blond-haired German speakers are distinctive, whether on their farm, returning from school or in family or church gatherings

The divide between Paraguay's small wealthy elite and the impoverished majority is vast throughout the country (the presidential palace in Asuncion, the capital, has slums expanding literally right below its walls). On average, Mennonites have a per capita income eight times the national average, and unemployment among them is virtually unknown. They are the economic force of the Chaco: their multi-million-dollar Trebol dairy company, for instance, has cornered nearly half of the national market. It is no surprise that Paraguayans use the expression "Working hard as a Mennonite."

While the Mennonites have embraced modernity, they still hold fast to precepts such as honesty. In a country where laws are sometimes loosely observed, the Mennonites pay all their taxes and stipulated wages. As well, the community tends to be closed to outsiders: internal social services provide care for the sick, disabled and elderly. "We are actors in the formal economy," says Andreas Ens, head of the Paraguayan Association of Mennonite Colonies, "but we have a private democracy."

The initial success of Menno opened the door during the 1930s and 1940s for the

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUAN BRITOS

founding of more colonies While Mennonite refugees fleeing Germany and Russia built neighbouring settlements in the Chaco, a second wave of Canadian immigrants, driven by objections to Canada's involvement in the Second World War, also arrived, carving out three additional colonies—Sommerfeld, Bergthal and Tres Palmas—from the thick jungle in the east With a more humid climate than the Chaco, that area supports intensive grain production, mostly based around soy High commodity prices have translated into wealth for these communities, too

But there are differences between the Canadian Mennonite colonies Bergthal is the most conservative Its school teaches exclusively in German (the others teach Spanish as well) and women still wear traditional dresses Bergthal is almost completely cut off from its Paraguayan neighbours, disapproving of contact with outsiders,

Such isolation may be helping to breed resentment The road to neighbouring Tres Palmas is marked with the sparse shacks of squatters who have moved onto the edges of Mennonite fields Security is a growing concern here, as land shortages in this part of the country have bred jealousy over the large Mennonite holdings But Tres Palmas, a community of freshly painted houses, whitewashed fences and perfectly trimmed gardens, is reaching out It is home to Radio Mensajero, which opened five years ago to provide religious programming not only for the Mennonites, but also to enrich the lives of the locals The radio station, which offers news, religious music, and talk shows in Spanish, German and Guarani, a local native language, has been well accepted in the area

This is the same spirit that drives the missionary church in Sommerfeld It focuses on helping less fortunate Paraguayans through the work of Pastor Jacob Heinrichs, the church has established daycare centres and clinics, and provides meals for the needy "We see it as a call from the Lord,"



Carl Hildebrand on his Sommerfeld farm with his children Jonathan, Natalia and Maria

says Heinrichs "We are a blessed society In a poor country It may help our community in the long term as well Locals will gain more confidence in us, as strangers here in Paraguay"

AMONG THIS fair-skinned, German-speaking minority in an overwhelmingly dark-skinned, Spanish-speaking country, there is little that seems outwardly Canadian Few of them speak English, much less know basic facts about Canadian history But the tie to Canada remains In the dark, dusty barn that is the Sommerfeld colony's museum, the Canadian past is laid out in framed photographs of Manitoba farms, old local newspaper clippings, antique sewing machines with the Eaton and Co. certificate still attached And the current connection? Many of these Mennonites have been maintaining their Canadian citizenship to keep the door open to returning to Canada to study or work. But now, under the transitional provisions of proposed immigration legislation, children of Canadians born outside the country must live in Canada for at least one year to retain their citizenship and get a passport, As of February 2005, this must be done before one's 28th birthday—or citizenship is lost forever

THE Canadian past is laid out in framed photographs of Manitoba farms and old local newspaper clippings

In the past two years, more than 1,000 of Menno's inhabitants have come to Canada because of the encroaching deadline (the numbers are lower from the eastern colonies, which tend to be more hesitant about leaving) Usually, those Mennonites returning to fulfill the requirements stay with family in Manitoba, where they study or work Most end up returning to Paraguay, but some settle into Canadian life

In the advanced high school class in Loma Plata, all but two of the 20 plus students intend to come to Canada after they graduate "It has become a rite of passage," says principal Walter Theissen. For each generation, the experience serves to replant the Canadian identity in the Paraguayan colonies Still, when the class is asked who they would cheer for if Paraguay played Canada in soccer, Paraguay wins out unanimously And if conditions seem ripe for an identity crisis, the community doesn't seem to show it Harry Gerbrand of Bergthal, who was raised in Canada, puts it plainly "I'm a Mennonite We are culturally different. There isn't much that's going to change that"

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUAN BATTIS

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

GREAT DRIVES

ClubLink's acclaimed Glen Abbey Golf Course in Oakville, Ontario requires 18 great drives. Nissan brings you a guided tour of the challenging par fives with golf director, Kevin Pauley.

If only those verdant fairways could talk. They'd recall the glory days of championship golf at Glen Abbey, beginning in 1977 when the dynamic Lee Trevino walked off with the coveted Bell Canadian Open Cup. They'd never forget that The Great White Shark, Greg Norman, scored an eagle on the sixth – a five iron from 177 yards – and went on to win the trophy in 1992. They'd still marvel at Tiger Woods' "shot of 2000", when he bulleted his bunker fairway shot more than 200 yards to birdie the 18th and earn him the Triple Crown, including sister tournaments, the British and U.S. Opens.

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> "Walk these fairways and you'll be treading in the footsteps of such golf legends as Arnold Palmer, Sam Snead, Tom Weiskopf and Nick Price..."

Glen Abbey was Jack Nicklaus' first solo design. Alas, the Golden Bear's name is missing from the club's du Maurier Wall of Champions, although he managed to finish second seven times – no small feat for a course with a slope rating of 140 from the 7,188-yard pro tees and devilishly contoured greens.

September 6-12, 2004 marks the centennial celebration of the Bell Canadian Open, the world's third oldest national championship, which returns to Glen Abbey for the 23rd time. Walk these fairways and you'll be treading in the footsteps of such golf legends as Arnold Palmer, Sam Snead, Tom Weiskopf and Nick Price, and rubbing shoulders with the best of 2004

Hole #1
(Par 5)



"The ideal tee shot is down the left side of the fairway. Decision time: long iron will get you to the green but right of the green is trouble. The safe play is to lay up, again down the left side, which will leave you a short iron to the long, narrow green. (The pros play this hole as a par four during the Open.)"

Yardage: 502
Ranking: 15

brought to you by NISSAN SHIFT_
ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

Hole #5
(Par 5)

"A left to right tee shot will leave you with a straight approach towards the green. I would not advise taking it over the trees on the right as the narrowed fairway may leave your ball in the rough. If you have a front pin, a long, straight second shot may get you home in two, but the safe play is to lay up over the right-hand fairway bunker, which will leave you a wedge to the green."

Yardage: 527
Ranking: 13



Hole #13
(Par 5)



"A good play is centre of the fairway. This is a three-shot par five for most golfers. Key to this hole is your second shot, which should be positioned down the left-hand side of the fairway, just short of the creek. Your club selection for your approach could change by two clubs on this long, narrow green."

Yardage: 558
Ranking: 12

Hole #16
(Par 5)

"Aim your tee shot down the right centre of the fairway. A great drive will leave you with an iron to the green. The new bunker in front of the green will force you to carry all the way to the green. (The pros play this hole as a par four during the Open.)"

Yardage: 516
Ranking: 14



Hole #18
(Par 5)



"This is my favounte hole on the golf course. This par five is short enough to hit in two with a great drive. Aim your tee shot left centre of the fairway, staying right of the fairway bunkers. A good drive should leave you with 200 yards to the green. Avoid back right pin, by aiming to the centre of the green."

Yardage: 524
Ranking: 16

For more great drives, visit www.macleans.ca/nissangreatdrives





The Coutos shelter provides refuge and skills training for young victims of abuse

LISTENING TO THE LOCALS

Canada no longer dictates how it will donate

FOR OVER 300 years, Salvador, on Brazil's northeast coast, was the gateway to the South American slave trade. Today, the city of about three million people throbs with a riotous, jubilant fusion of African and Latin American energy. Its vibrant culture, however, is undercut by a social system in tatters. South of Salvador's core, tucked in the crowded seaside suburb of Coutos, an unremarkable iron gate conceals a shelter for abused children, mentally handicapped adults and abandoned seniors. Narrow dirt paths through dense stands of sugar cane fan out to a complex of one-storey stucco buildings and concrete courtyards. Murielle Fortin, a diminutive, soft-spoken nun from Temiscamingue, Que., manages the Coutos shelter. As we approached their dorm style residence, a group of young women gathered on the stone terrace. They were just children, many clutching their own babies.

Among them was Luiza, a 13-year-old mother of a 15-month old son. Knowing that many of the residents were victims of violence or sexual abuse, I'd expected her to be fearful. But her eyes sparkled warmly and, when I was introduced to her, she had a surprisingly firm handshake. "She is safe here," explains Sister Murielle. Luiza was just 10 the first time her father raped her. Now, she's the mother of his child. The birth ripped the family apart, leaving Luiza and baby Marco homeless and destitute. But Canada is quietly helping Luiza and others like her.

'THESE people want to help themselves, not rely on handouts. We just help them get started.'

In 2002, the Canadian International Development Agency gave the shelter a one-time $22,000 grant to build a bakery and pay for the equipment and staff training. Today the bakery provides the young women and people in the community with work and skills training. The bread is used for the 1,200 daily meals at the Coutos shelter and a half-dozen other health facilities that Sister Fortin manages in and around Salvador. Baked goods are also sold in local markets, with the proceeds helping to support the shelter. The grant from CIDA's Canada Fund for Local Initiatives also paid for a classroom on the third floor of the bakery, where Luiza and others learn how to feed and care for their children. "These people want to help themselves, not rely on handouts," says the nun. "We just help them get started."

The bakery project clashes with a typical, cynical view of aid—millions spent or lost, with little local impact. But the bakery and dozens of similar small aid projects and joint ventures show just how far a little money can go. This is key in an era when funding for Canada's foreign development programs represents just 0.29 per cent of the gross national product, down considerably from its peak of 0.53 per cent of GNP in 1975-76.

For decades, Canada's aid policy, like that of other developed countries, was based on two core beliefs: that human progress is linked to large modern infrastructure, and that impoverished foreign governments should be consulted about the aid they were receiving, but the donor would run the show. The blueprint today for foreign aid emphasizes a wide range of big and small projects, and acknowledges that recipient governments and their local organizations know best what they need. Minister for International Cooperation Aileen Carroll has no laments for the days of huge brick-and-mortar aid. "Of course mistakes have been made," she says, "and we're determined to learn from them."

Nevertheless, CIDA has a credibility problem at a critical time. A lingering perception of waste and mismanagement could threaten Paul Martin's pre-election pledge to increase foreign aid spending. A minority government promises further uncertainty. Meanwhile, CIDA struggles with how to promote its successes. In the old days of the megaproject, there were clear yardsticks. The story now is not how big the bakery is, or how many buns Luiza bakes, but what long-term impact security and good nutrition will ultimately have on baby Marco. M

PHOTOGRAPH BY STUART HICKOX

A survival guide to gadget world

From tools for kids to toys for grown-ups, gadgets are everywhere, and lots more are coming this fall. Find out what works—and what's a waste of money.

RING TONES were a $4.6 billion global industry last year.

Let's do that again: ring tones—those irksome patterns of bells and beats sold for down load to cellphones, on which they chirp and squawk in movie theatres, classrooms and other places that request silence—brought in *$4.6 billion* in 2003. They're aural candy, frivolous in every way—and damning evidence that the age of the gadget is upon us.

Something has definitely changed. The only feature first generation cellphones needed to impress was the ability to carry a conversation. Their current descendants combine telephones, digital cameras, personal digital assistants, gaming platforms, video and music players, Internet browsers and text messengers. These so-called smart phones share a neat trick: they actually work.

Tech gadgets used to be gimmicks—unrivalled in ambition, useless in action. Computer companies set on ramming the maximum amount of function into the minimum amount of space turned convergence into a dirty word. It took a geek to love these devices, and a rich geek to afford them.

Today's better, cheaper gadgets have breached the realm of popular culture. The information revolution of the 1990s birthed a global village, this decade's information evolution is about miniaturizing yesterday's successes into seems-like sci-fi wonders. R & D has closed the gap with James Bond fantasy gizmos, and the next benchmark, *Star Trek* tech, is coming sooner than you may think. We already have wireless headphones that double as phone headsets, vibrating pillows that tell you ocean wave conditions, and watches with TVs. Disney recently introduced disposable DVDs that erase themselves 48 hours after being opened. Mission impossible? Mission already accomplished.

TECH gadgets used to be gimmicks, but today's better and cheaper items have breached the realm of popular culture

The pace of development is dizzying. Keeping up with the Jetsons used to mean a peek at *Wired* magazine's Fetish pages, now commercial weblogs such as *Gizmodo.com* and *Engadget.com* race to provide up-to-the-minute scoops on the very latest in digital chic: "The SPH-A700 is a nice enough clamshell, if a little too round and oddly coloured for my taste", "we have seen the future, and it is tiny sombreros for consumer electronics."

Peel back the hyperbole, and the big bang in pocket power can be traced to two sources: the BlackBerry and the iPod. Introduced by Waterloo, Ont.'s Research in Motion in early 1999, the thickset, rectangular BlackBerry was the first machine to satisfy the promise of the ultra-portable office. Originally a mobile emailer, now it's also an organizer and a cellphone. Today, 1.3 million customers subscribe to RIM's messaging service. (Oprah Winfrey's review: "Love it! Love it! Love it!") Many find its anytime-anywhere electronic tether addictive, and have rechristened it CrackBerry. I know of one professional who has a Velcro BlackBerry mount on his steering wheel, the better to type while driving. In May, the *New York Times* ran a story about a Capitol Hill employee who panicked while vacationing in Martha's Vineyard—unable to locate a signal for his BlackBerry,

he asked an airline employee to rake it on a round trip flight to the American mainland It returned with 129 new messages

While RIM remains the market leader in mobile emailers, some are switching to the likes of the Treo Part of the reason: the BlackBerry uses proprietary software with limited applications, Treos can run up to 17,000 programs, with more coming every day Size is another factor Placing a call on the BlackBerry feels like talking into a pack of cigarettes The Treo 600 is barely smaller, but the difference matters

Apple's iPod, on the other hand, has lost none of its cachet in the three years since its debut If anything, the MP3 player's fourth generation, out this summer, increases its reputation as the acme of digital leisure. The white wired tribe is growing by leaps, with more than 800,000 units shipping in this year's second quarter That's a 909 per cent increase over the same time last year.

I consider mine a cocoon, a musical wonderland that packs 90-odd hours of sound into the palm of my hand. I caught the iPod's second wave, lucking into a 10-gigabyte birthday gift from an ex-girlfriend. I came to it as a confirmed music nerd, that special type of idiot who brings 250 CDs on an hour-long car trip I have taken my iPod rock climbing in Costa Rica and have the scratched screen to prove it I cannibalized its remote control months ago to steady a headphone jack damaged by too many trips to the bottom of my backpack. With my iPod, I can bike crosstown blasting Iron Maiden at lawnmower levels. I like jogging with 2Pac, listening to audio books while grocery shopping and lounging in parks wrapped inside a reggae halo.

So what's the next blockbuster in gadgetry? I'd welcome any marriage of the Treo and the iPod The former already plays MP3s, but doesn't look as good or store as much as the latter But there's no rush The future is digital The future is portable The future is here MATTHEW MCKINNON

SHOPPING TIP

Don't buy too soon "Never get the latest and greatest," says Leo Laporte, host of *Call for Help* on G4techTV Canada. "That's reserved for the early adopters who want bragging rights." Last year's model is more than sufficient for most of us.

WHAT YOUR KIDS REALLY, *REALLY* WANT

Gadgets that are just cool enough for school

Kids are the IT consultants to the increasingly wired home, "the most knowledgeable people in the family," says Stacey Atkin of Toronto's Solutions Research Group, who studies the teen lifestyle. Naturally, they have precise preferences in the gear they'll tote to school The good news: they aren't oblivious to cost—Atkin reports that kids often seek out money-saving options in order to justify a purchase. With the help of SRG, we asked a group of teens to round up this year's back-to-school necessities DEREK CHEZZI

GAME CONSOLE

Warning the compact Game Boy Advance SP, the most recent entry in Nintendo's lineup, will be impossible to pry out of a 13-year-old's hands. It comes in a range of colours, and is ubiquitous on school buses. The next generation of gaming handhelds is around the corner (page 45) and bound to show up on holiday gift lists. **KIDS' CHOICE:** Game Boy Advance SP, cobalt, $139.95

PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANT

PDAs are being marketed to kids as young as elementary level now Still, says Daniel, "anything with a schedule in it is the opposite of what teenagers are about." But some took to study-buddy PDA software, such as a measurement converter. Parents: stay away from feature heavy models If it looks like work, they'll never use it **KIDS' CHOICE:** Palm Zire 31, $229.99.

MP3 PLAYER

Second only to a cellphone among must haves—and Apple's sleek iPod tops the list of I-wants, hands down "It's my prized possession," says Lily. Now available in a mini version, but get ready for requests for a faster computer, as kids will complain about how long it takes to get music off their CDs—or the Net—and onto the player **KIDS' CHOICE:** iPod mini, pink, $349.99



PHOTOGRAPH BY HASNA M BATTU

SHOPPING TIP

Go for refurbished before used You can find deep discounts on demos, but who knows how they've been handled. Consider refurbished products that may never have been used: often they went back to the manufacturer for testing and repackaging.

SMART WATCH

The multi-tasking MSN Direct Smart Watch is a cool toy with grown-up appeal once you sign up for MSN's service, it gets news bites, sports scores, forecasts, horoscopes, even instant messages. "It's awesome," adds Daniel "It can do anything." **KIDS' CHOICE:** Fossil Smart Watches, $199 and up (plus $14.95 for monthly service plan).

VOICE RECORDER

It only takes a visit to a lecture hall to see the popularity of digital recorders. "I can't write very fast," says Julie, "so it would be helpful." Many units can download sound files directly to a PC, and some come with digital cameras. **KIDS' CHOICE:** Olympus W10 recorder, $159.95

CELLPHONE

"It's unheard of not to have one," says Julie. Most models double as calendars, calculators and more. Older teens want phones with cameras because, to quote a character from Fox's *The O.C.*, "Camera phones are the autograph of the 21st century." **KIDS' CHOICE:** Motorola T720, starting at $49 (plus monthly service plan)

PHONE ACCESSORIES

Who wants a phone that looks like everyone else's? The growing bevy of add-ons ranges from snazzy faceplates and clips that attach to backpacks or clothing to colour screens, ring IDs for different callers, and images to dress up screens. **KIDS' CHOICE:** Rivet Catwalk clip, $24.99.

USB MEMORY DRIVE

Homework to go. Even the smallest of these portable memory devices can easily store several Word files, photos and a PowerPoint presentation. Some have tiny digital cameras. They're compatible with PCs and Macs, as long as computers at home and school sport USB sockets. **KIDS' CHOICE:** Lexar JumpDrive (64 MB), $49.99.

WEBCAM

Girls are, like, all about socializing, and instant messaging and webcams allow them to break curfew without leaving the bedroom. If you do buy a webcam, beware that pleas for high-speed Internet access won't be far behind. **KIDS' CHOICE:** Logitech QuickCam Zoom, $129.99

LOGITECH WEBCAM AND CELLPHONE CLIP PROVIDED BY RADIOSHACK

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

Walkie-talkies are little more than kiddie fun

The best thing about using walkie-talkies is giving yourself a handle. Soon after cracking open the new Motorola Talkabout T6500R, I decided on Dark Shadow, and my wife opted for Grey Squirrel. The last time I had used a walkie-talkie was in a friend's basement when I was about 10. But back then, the handset was made of cheap plastic and the sound quality was so awful I could barely hear my friend from five metres. So Motorola's stylish model and promise of clear sound for eight kilometres was pretty exciting.

First stop: the grocery store. I kept the device within easy reach so my wife could offer input from home. Overall, the connection wasn't bad, although I swear I heard her say salmon, not sole. While I searched for fresh ravioli, however, a deep voice (not my wife's, I can say confidently) echoed from my pants—prompting the gaze of those around me to head south. I appeared to be picking up another conversation. Rather than trying to explain, I turned off the T6500R and figured I'd take my chances at the deli counter alone.

The sound quality was good walking home that quiet Sunday evening, but clarity became an issue on the way to work the next morning. Even at top volume my wife, who was also walking to work, was barely audible. The annoying crackling didn't help, and our signal kept getting crossed with others—making it tough to tell her to switch to another channel (the T6500R has 22 channels). At one point, two unknown voices squawked from the unit. One of the men said something about blowing something up. I thought about calling 911 but didn't have a phone. And there's the thing. Seemingly everyone (except me) has a cellphone, so who needs a walkie talkie? Although cheap at $119.99 a pair, and with no monthly fees, the T6500R offers little more than some fun for kids.

JOHN INTINI

Money's Worth | MP3 players | Apple's ahead, but the challengers are lining up

Dozens of tiny MP3 players are flooding the market in an attempt to challenge Apple's iPod and the just released iPod mini. Here's a look at how three of the competitors stack up to the reigning champ.

JOHN INTINI









	CREATIVE MUVO SLIM—$239.99	APPLE IPOD MINI—$349.99	SAMSUNG YEPP-T5V—$349.99	PHILIPS MICRO AUDIO JUKEBOX—US$199.99
INSIDE	Holds up to eight hours of music on 256MB of flash memory. Built in mike turns unit into a recorder. Can store photos. FM radio has 32 presets. Battery life: up to 17 hours.	Can hold 1,000 songs on its 4GB of memory. Uses a USB 2.0 cable for fast transfers from Mac or PC. No FM tuner, but with this many songs who needs one?	The 256MB flash memory can hold about 80 songs. Comes equipped with an FM radio. Has a built-in microphone to turn it into a recorder. Battery life: up to 12 hours.	1.5GB of hard-disc memory can store up to 750 songs. Has an equalizer and bass boost. No FM tuner. Battery life: up to 10 hours.
OUTSIDE	Won't fit in your wallet, but the credit card-like size is rather impressive. However, the tiny display screen leaves a bit to be desired and controls are clumsy.	Certainly the best looking of the lot. Available in five trendy colours, which undoubtedly broadens the appeal among younger consumers.	The tiny unit is incredibly light (24 grams). But the small controls are a nuisance and the display, which is also very small, can be a challenge to read.	Is obviously modelled after Apple's mini, with its stylish appearance and well-placed controls.
EASE OF USE	Super-light, although the push buttons are tiny and awkward to use. But eight hours of music is enough to keep you from running back and forth to your PC for new songs.	Click Wheel makes scrolling through playlists simple. Apple's iTunes offers an effective way to organize and transfer your tunes.	Mini-buttons make handling a bit difficult. It helps that songs can be grouped in folders, but the software, like the MuVo's, is confusing. Use Windows Media Player instead. PCs only.	SuperScroll feature makes it easy to quickly find music, but you can't transfer music files from CDs on models HDD060 or HDD070. Separate software required.
BEST FOR	Design doesn't make it a great unit for working out. But the sound quality is strong considering the size of the player and speaker.	Just about anything, due to its light weight and durability. Sound quality is excellent (25-minute anti-skip protection). And don't forget the cool factor—if you care.	The gym or a run. In fact, it's so tiny you might forget you have it, which for some people might be a bit of a liability. Seems easy to misplace. Overall good sound.	Much like the mini, it's extremely functional—making it a good alternative, especially considering the price. To top things off, it offers great CD quality sound.

OUR PICK: [illegible], Apple is still miles ahead in this category. The mini's style and sound quality is unparalleled.

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WHAT DAD REALLY, *REALLY* WANTS

How to soup up your dashboard—safely

Considering how much time North Americans spend in their cars, it's no wonder we demand optimal comfort, safety and even entertainment. As a result, the dashboard, especially on deluxe models, is starting to resemble the Batmobile's. Apparently that's just the beginning. "In the not-too-distant future, cars won't need steering wheels or gas and brake pedals," says Sue Stone, technician with Halton Auto Electrics, a repair garage in Oakville, Ont. She runs through popular new on-board technology and its on-the-road performance. DEREK CHEZZI

BACK-UP CAMERA 1

Put your car in reverse, and a monitor in the dash displays a video image picked up by a rear camera, alerting you to what lies behind. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "Helps avoid fender-benders in the parking lot."

HEADS-UP DISPLAY

It projects a monochrome image of the instrument panel onto your windshield, allowing you to keep your eyes on the road. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "It takes some getting used to. I found it annoying sometimes to have it sitting in the line of vision. But it's good not having to look down at the instruments."

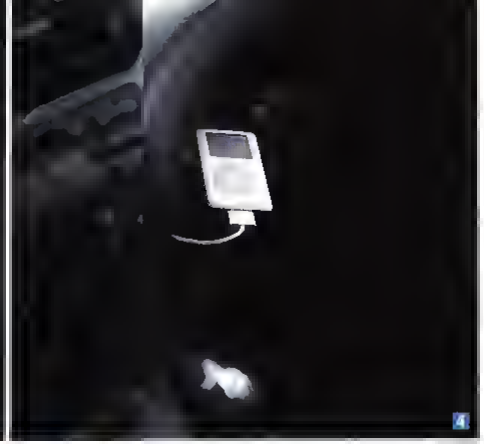
NIGHT VISION

The infrared system detects objects beyond the range of a car's headlights, and projects their image onto the windshield. It's especially useful on country roads with no lighting. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "Anything that lets you see ahead and gives you time to react is good."

AUTO-DIMMING REAR-VIEW MIRROR 2

A big annoyance of driving at night is having headlights reflect off the rear-view mirror and into your eyes. Lexus's answer: a mirror on some models that automatically dims the glare. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "A nice toy if you can afford it," says Stone. "But I can see more expense in repairs if it doesn't work."













REMOTE CONTROL 3

Garage-door remotes have been around for a while, but some vehicles are now being equipped with permanently mounted units that can also be programmed to operate front gates and security and lighting systems. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "Like keyless remote ignition, especially useful in cold weather, snow and rain."

IN-CAR IPOD 4

The MP3 player's control requires dexterity while driving. So BMW and Apple have introduced an adapter so Beemer drivers can connect it to car stereos and operate it using either the radio or steering wheel controls. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "Those who enjoy music in the car are a key market for this sort of thing."

ON-BOARD NAVIGATION GPS 5

Navigators have come a long way since being introduced in the mid-1990s: some now sport touch screens and respond to more than 100 voice commands. Linked to satellites, they can help you find gas stations along your route or hotels in a strange city. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** Handy if you travel a lot, says Stone. "But until they're tied to local traffic conditions, they're little use to the average person on daily commutes."

SATELLITE RADIO

When the CRTC gets around to approving the services (likely not till next year), drivers—viewed as the primary market—will be able to get some 100 digital stations, including more than 60 commercial-free music channels, talk radio and sports—for a proposed $10-$12 a month. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "It's useful for someone spending a lot of time in their car."

BLUETOOTH PHONES 6

Bluetooth's hands-free technology allows drivers to use voice commands to turn on cellphones and dial numbers. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "It keeps the driver's attention on the road rather than having to fumble with buttons or dial a phone number."

DVD PLAYER

Minivans have had back-seat DVD players for years, but some carmakers are making DVD viewing available in the front, via the on-board navigation screen. The players are designed to work only while in park, but unfortunately the lock-out feature can be circumvented. **EXPERT'S VERDICT:** "Anything that might distract the driver means there is a greater chance for an accident."

UNWIRED!

With the WiFi revolution, you're always connected

I'm on the back porch with my laptop for a few minutes of quiet time while my newborn daughter dozes. I like coming out here after dinner to catch up on emails, browse weblogs and listen to tunes stored on my computer upstairs. Outside and fully connected—and it cost me just $150 to set up. I plugged a "base station" into my high-speed modem and a transceiver into the laptop, and that was pretty much it. This wireless network now links any device in my house that has a WiFi (wireless fidelity) chip—laptop, handheld, printer, gaming console—to the others and to the Internet. When my father-in-law asks to see his new granddaughter, I carry my laptop up to the crib and point its webcam at her, giving grampa a live look over the Web.

Mobility aside, it's the ability to share files that makes our network great for us. Manufacturers are now rolling out digital entertainment centres—computers that look more like stereos or VCRs—designed to become your entertainment hubs, where you can store all your video or sound files on one huge hard drive. Because the units connect to cable or satellite receivers, you can record, pause and rewind live TV shows, then beam them to a computer in another room. Now, if I could only change a diaper wirelessly.... MICHAEL SNIDER

TIPS

A, B, OR G? Wireless networks come in an alphabet soup of standards. The best is G, listed as 802.11g.

SIGNAL Gets weaker the farther away you are from the base station. Installing it on the main floor makes the most sense, but keep it away from microwaves and cordless phones, which can cause interference.

SHOPPING TIP

LISTEN TO REAL USERS Find out all you can before you step into the store. Check the product specs and user reviews on sites such as *epinions.com* or *amazon.ca*. "Media reviewers often don't pick up on a problem that a real person does," says Laporte.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HASNAIN DATTU

FIVE OF THE ALL-TIME BEST...

Let's have a really big hand for the Clapper

CALCULATOR It was revolutionary—the original tech gadget, really—back when all it could do was add, subtract, multiply and divide. Now it can practically do your taxes by itself, but no longer gets any respect.

TV REMOTE First marketed in the 1950s because it was just so much damn work getting up from the sofa to change the channel, remotes became ubiquitous in the 1980s after advances in transistor and infrared technology made them cheap and versatile. Now on stereos, DVD players, even air conditioners—soon, we may never have to leave the couch again.

WALKMAN-DISCMAN-IPOD CONTINUUM It's not fair to pick one over the others as each represents the same precious thing for its generation: the ability to lose yourself in a sonic world of your own.



ALARM CLOCK Most people have a love-hate relationship with their alarm clock. You're cranky and tired in the morning and it just won't shut up, but then it does help get you to work on time and contributes to paying your bills. And sometimes you have to admire its persistence.

THE CLAPPER It's hard to figure why this piece of genius—which allows you to turn lights and other electric devices on and off by clapping your hands—was only nominally popular when it debuted. Just think of the time it saves from having to walk across a room to the switch. Brutally underrated—a true classic.

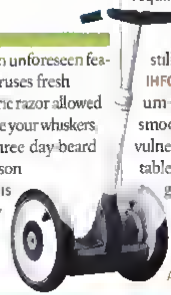
AND FIVE OF THE ALL-TIME WORST

The Internet fridge and others that left us cold

SEGWAY HUMAN TRANSPORTER Remember the hype about this technology being "bigger than the Internet"? Now most know this stand-up scooter as the supposedly unflippable gizmo that almost knocked out George W. Bush's teeth when he fell off it.

INTERNET FRIDGE Its inventors called it the appliance of the future: it would help you manage your kitchen by building grocery lists based on its contents, surf the Net for recipes, and more. But it's a fridge—how complicated does it need to be? An unforeseen feature: it keeps computer viruses fresh.

STUBBLE DEVICE This electric razor allowed you to trim rather than shave your whiskers. The result: that coveted three-day-beard look sported by Don Johnson on *Miami Vice*. Johnson is now involved in bankruptcy proceedings. Wahl Clipper Corp., the manufacturer, keeps on ticking.



APPLE NEWTON Before the Palm Pilot, there was the Newton, the first personal handwriting-recognition tablet and organizer. Intended to replace notepads, it was heavy, required hours of "training," and was prone to errors. Meeting notes became "Lsklp adhal lasdkfjue." We're still laughing.

INFOMERCIAL FODDER The Flowbee vacuum-like haircutter, the Ab Tronic flab smoother: the list of crappy gizmos sold to vulnerable insomniacs goes on and on—no table exceptions being the George Foreman grill, and the aforementioned Clapper.

WHAT ARE THE BEST AND WORST GADGETS EVER? HAVE YOUR SAY AT WWW.MACLEANS.CA/GADGETS

Money's Worth | Smart phones | Scads of features—for scads of dollars

Cellphones and personal digital assistants are increasingly melding into "smart phones," which in turn are outselling PDAs by as much as two to one this year. You can use them to call home, check email, surf the Web and update your daytimer—but they'll cost you. MICHAEL SNIDER



PALM [illegible] $374.99	[illegible]	AUDIOVOX [illegible] POCKET PC,	SONY [illegible] $1,000
WHO IT'S FOR			
Easy to handle and with a good mix of features, this model aims squarely at the mainstream. Find hundreds of applications and games (for a fee) at *www.palmone.com/ca*.	Wear a tie five days a week? Then this is practically an ID badge for your tribe. Even with the phone, this is a no-guff gadget that keeps you connected in real time.	Running Windows Mobile software, this handheld will appeal to Windows devotees, as it's got some familiar applications, including Media Player and Messenger.	In a word: sophisticated. Thin and light compared to the others, the P900 has a flip-down keypad that, when open, expands the screen to 40mm by 61mm.
THE GUTS			
144MHz processor, 32MB of memory with a card expansion slot for storing extras such as MP3s. Includes 0.3-megapixel camera and a Web browser.	Offers email, messaging (SMS), a Web browser and applications such as calendar and contacts.	Powerful 400MHz processor, 64MB memory and a slot for more. Also has an infrared port and a voice recorder.	Has 48MB of internal memory and ships with a 32MB Memory Stick Duo. Can navigate through with stylus or a scroll wheel. Comes with 0.3-megapixel video and still-digital camera.
UPSIDE			
First "quad-band" phone available in Canada. It allows you to make and receive calls in almost any country with cell service. Doesn't crash or hang up like some others.	Made for email, and does it better than any: messages to your work or home accounts pop up on the screen the moment they hit the inbox. Excellent keyboard.	Huge, vibrant colour screen. It synced with laptop flawlessly. Versatile: can access email, play MP3s, download videos and surf the Web.	Fully loaded with phone and PDA features, such as conference calling, text and multimedia messaging, phone book, Web browser. Video camera is a blast.
DOWNSIDE			
Need Thumbelina-sized digits to type on the keypad. Picture quality, especially indoors, is moderate to poor. Can't connect wirelessly to devices like cordless headsets.	Limited memory and no card slot for extras. Takes no pictures or video, and has very few add-on applications.	Size matters, in reverse. Felt as if holding a toaster to the ear while making a call, and needed to wipe smudges off the display after each conversation. No keyboard.	Does not support analogue roaming, which means you're limited to Fido's digital networks in urban centres and on heavily travelled highways. No keyboard.

OUR PICK: The P900 is impressive but pricey. The BlackBerry is simple and tops for heavy emailers. But Treo is best all-around.

Money's Worth | Game consoles | Making a move on the back-seat market

The next front in the game industry war is the back seat of the minivan. As companies like Sony and Nokia move in on Nintendo's territory, looking for a piece of the $4-billion portable console market pie, one thing is assured: we aren't talking about your brother's Game Boy. DEREK CHEZZI



	N-GAGE QD, $249 (PLUS MONTHLY SERVICE PLAN)	NINTENDO DS, PRICE TBA	PSP (PLAYSTATION PORTABLE), PRICE TBA	TAPWAVE ZODIAC, $389 TO $529
IN A NUTSHELL				
	A cellphone and gaming console in one, for those who need to stay in touch with friends—or work—while engrossed in a session of *The Sims*.	It's Game Boy on steroids. The next step in the evolution of mobile gaming.	It's like having PlayStation in your back pocket. With gaming, music and video, this is an all-in-one entertainment device.	Digital organizer for someone looking to play a quick game of *Doom II* or *Asteroids* during tedious quarterly update meetings.
GAME SELECTION				
	Moderate. Compatible with the original 19 N-Gage games (another 19 titles due by spring), but these include such powerhouse hits as *FIFA 2004* and *Spider-Man 2*.	Strong. While 60 new titles are in development, the DS will also be compatible with Game Boy Advance games, providing a massive library and allowing GBA owners to upgrade without replacing collections.	Unknown. Sony says 99 game companies have "expressed support" for the PSP, but there may only be a few titles available at launch.	Underwhelming: a small library consisting of a handful of blockbuster titles, a couple of retro games and some basics like solitaire.
COOL FEATURE				
	The N-Gage is a beast at multi-player gaming—wirelessly with up to seven friends or with international opponents over a cellular network. Features include email, Web browser—and you can make phone calls, too.	Up to 16 players can battle wirelessly, and potentially many more in WiFi "hot spots" once future games take advantage of the technology. Multiple players need only one game copy. The dual screen combines an LCD and touchscreen.	Can play wirelessly with other PSPs and over a WiFi home network. The device also has infrared technology (the type in Palm handhelds). Plays music and full-motion video on a screen substantially larger than those of rival units.	Allows wireless gaming with up to seven other Zodiacs. Has all the features you'll find in a mid-range PDA—touch-sensitive screen, contact list, calculator—plus can play MP3s and store photos and video.
VERDICT				
	Head and shoulders above the original model, with a comfortable grip and smaller size that no longer feels as if you're talking into a taco when using it as a phone.	The one to beat: dual screen means never having to flip between the action and map screens. But awkward to hold in one hand while using stylus to control onscreen action with the other.	Sony is zealously guarding tester units, but at the E3 electronics show a PSP screening a *Spiderman 2* trailer and music videos caused much buzz. The last to hit the shelves: expect aggressive pricing.	The new kid has a lot of catching up to do. Its ergonomic design and tiny joystick are welcome, but they come with a high sticker price. Plan to spend on extra memory cards for the multimedia features.
AVAILABILITY				
	Now	Christmas 2004	Spring 2005	Fall

OUR PICK: Nintendo DS. For the gaming purist, it has the largest game selection, and promises a new level of gaming experience.

ON THE HORIZON

Watch for these within the next 12 to 18 months

PORTABLE MEDIA CENTRES Running Microsoft's Media Center software, these multimedia players let you carry movies, tunes and photos on a device the size of a paperback. Record a show on a PC, transfer it to the portable and watch it on the bus to work. Creative and iRiver models are expected in stores next month, priced around $600.

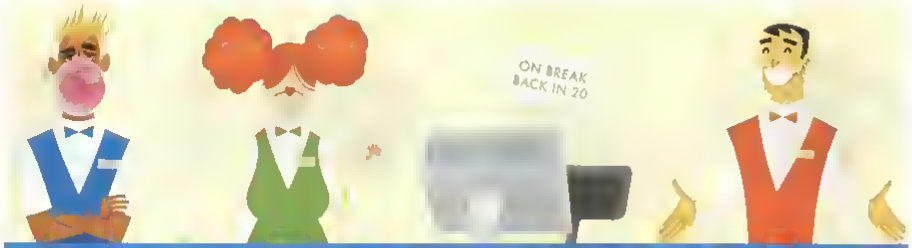
WIFI PHONES These hybrids will combine three technologies—WiFi wireless, Internet telephony and broadband. It's convenient: you could start a call on your home wireless network, switch to a cellphone as you drive to work, then end the call over the office WiFi network—with no interruptions. You'll also save by being able to shift call minutes from the cellphone plan onto the flat-fee Internet bill. Available late this year, from Motorola, Hewlett-Packard and others.

BLU-RAY DVD PLAYERS Just as you finish switching your videotape collection to DVDs, another format is here. Blu-ray discs will store more than five times as much material as regular DVDs, and can be made largely from paper. The format (it uses blue lasers rather than DVDs' red, hence the name) is spearheaded by a Sony-led consortium. Players are expected on the market by the end of next year, and they won't be cheap.

MP3 JACKET That's right, an MP3 player sewn right into a sports coat. The MP3blue men's jacket from Rosner, a German clothing company, and electronics maker Infineon, has control buttons on a sleeve and headphones inside the collar. There's more—a phone mike in the coat's collar, allowing you to talk on a cellphone hands-free (make sure you take the player and battery module out before you clean the jacket). Available February 2005, at US$725, from *www.rosner.de*. Also coming from Infineon: an MP3-equipped snowboarding jacket.

SHOPPING TIP

BE WARY OF LIQUIDATIONS You may find amazing deals on discontinued products, but choose brand-name stuff. Make sure the warranty is valid in Canada. Liquidators will sometimes buy from one country and sell in another where the warranty is void.



Money's Worth | Home theatre | In search of the big picture

The mission: go undercover at four national chains to test the sales staff's expertise and customer service. We asked for advice about buying a home theatre package with a TV, DVD player and surround-sound speakers—for a room measuring 11 by 14 feet. JOHN INTINI

	THE BAY	THE SONY STORE	RADIOSHACK	FUTURE SHOP
MINUTES BEFORE OFFERED HELP	3:09	7:23	3:50	0:13
THE SALESPERSON	Awful. Salesman just pointed to different models he felt were in our price range—never actually asked how much we wanted to spend, never explained features. Said most of the units were very similar, that we didn't need a TV bigger than 27 inches, and should stick with the one on sale.	Spoke with authority about the importance of going with HDTV-compatible unit. After showing some options (each $1,499), explained the value of progressive scanning in improving HDTV picture. When we showed interest in some regular tube TVs, he said a 27-inch or 32-inch unit was sufficient and pointed out options. Recommended the cheaper one.	Things got off to a bad start when stiffer answered his cellphone while helping us. No apology was forthcoming. Didn't bother explaining the differences between the units on display, just read the features from the affixed stickers.	Very confident discussing different technologies. Talked at length about the advantages of a unit that will receive HDTV. Explained that more wattage on tuner doesn't mean louder sound but greater clarity. Often referred back to the size of our room, saying we could go as large as 42 inches if we opted for a projection screen.
THE STORE	Many parts of the electronics department were disorganized and tough to navigate. Well staffed, with five salespeople.	Very well-organized, with plenty of product options—more, in fact, than at The Bay, even though has almost solely Sony products. But several salespeople walked by customers on their way to a break.	Poor display of very few home theatre options, all tightly packed in a small corner of the store. (In fairness, though, store specializes in smaller gadgets.) Three guys behind the counter.	A bit cluttered, but the widest range of choices. Three or four people just in the TV section.

OUR PICK: Future Shop: best service and range of options—with complete explanations—at different price points.

ILLUSTRATION BY LUC LATULIPPE

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Production platform off Sable Island, the only remaining gas-producing project

SANDOR FIZLI

Business | BY STEVE MAICH

NOVA SCOTIA'S DRY SPELL

The energy sector has not delivered on its promises

IT'S A WARM Thursday afternoon in August, and about 75 people have crowded into a community hall in Port Hawkesbury, just across the causeway separating Cape Breton Island from mainland Nova Scotia. The sign outside says "Ceilidh Tonight," but the musicians won't arrive for hours yet. This crowd has come to hear Premier John Hamm preach a familiar gospel of oil and gas salvation.

Hamm is here to announce that Texas energy giant Anadarko Petroleum Corp. has acquired a small Canadian company planning to build an up to $500-million liquefied natural gas plant at nearby Point Tupper. "With the right effort, and the right leadership, the energy sector will grow—creating more jobs and opportunities for Nova Scotians at home," the premier enthuses. "And a more attractive location for investment, for potential partners around the world."

According to Nova Scotia's government, this is the latest in a long line of successes for the province's burgeoning energy sector. But this plant is being built to import gas from Africa and the Middle East and to distribute it primarily to the U.S. northeast. The province will collect no royalties, and after construction the facility will employ 40 people at the most. The real heart of Nova Scotia's energy industry is its offshore gas fields, and they have provided few reasons to celebrate lately. On the very day of Hamm's enthusiastic announcement, ExxonMobil Corp. quietly abandoned another exploration well, called Cree, in the waters off Nova Scotia's eastern shore. And two weeks later came a more serious blow, as Marathon Oil abandoned its highly anticipated Crimson deep-water well after failing to find sufficient quantities of gas.

But Nova Scotians are getting used to such disappointments. Dry wells, expired exploration licenses and plummeting gas reserves have been the story of Nova Scotia's energy industry of late. It's been almost five years since the Sable Offshore Energy Program started pumping gas from beneath the ocean floor, and it remains the only producing well in Nova Scotian waters. More than four years have passed since the last significant gas discovery, as more than a dozen wells have come up dry. After three decades of intense hype and predictions of economic rebirth, Nova Scotians and industry observers have come to doubt that the energy sector will ever live up to its billing.

Ian Doig has worked in the energy industry for more than four decades as a lobbyist and independent analyst. He says Nova Scotia's leaders need to own up to the sobering reality unfolding in the province's waters. "There is no other offshore basin in the world that has such a dismal drilling record and still has people running around saying it's world class," says Doig. "Somebody has to sit down, take a cold shower and do some sobering up, because with each dry hole you're seeing the tide going out on the Nova Scotia offshore."

JOHN HAMM is not the first Nova Scotia politician to score points assuring constituents that a brighter day of gas-fuelled wealth is just around the corner. It's been a common theme with successive provincial governments dating back to October 1971, when then-premier Gerald Regan heralded Mobil Oil's historic discovery near Sable Island, off the province's eastern shore. Regan held up a small test tube of oil and declared it "might well be the future prosperity of Nova Scotia." The next day's *Halifax Chronicle Herald* carried a screaming 10 cm headline across the top of the front page: "IT'S OIL." Prosperity, however, would be slow in coming.

There were sporadic discoveries of gas and oil through the 1970s as the industry continued to test and evaluate the region's potential. The biggest came in 1979, when Mobil discovered gas in the Venture field near Sable Island. Like Regan before him, Tory premier John Buchanan spent much of the 1980s talking about the enormous benefits that would soon flow to the province. As if to underscore that confidence, the province unleashed a rush of spending aimed at fostering development of the industry. That spending has left Nova Scotia dotted with ill-fated public works projects, from a virtually untouched industrial park in Melford, created to house an oil refinery that was never built, to Riverview Consolidated School in the tiny outport of New Harbour, built in the 1970s for a rush of settlement that never materialized. The school was built to accommodate 400 students, but last year it had just 17.

Perhaps the most infamous example is Highway 374 connecting tiny Sheet Harbour on the eastern shore with New Glasgow, about 85 km to the north. The Buchanan government used an offshore development fund to build the road in the 1980s on the basis that Sheet Harbour would soon be a key supply depot for drilling rigs. But in 1987, falling natural gas prices put the Venture field on hold. It wouldn't be revived until 12

years later, as part of the Sable project Sheet Harbour never became the supply hub that was expected, and Nova Scotians ruefully call Highway 374 the "road to nowhere."

Larry Hughes has watched it all unfold with a mixture of frustration and sadness. The professor in the electrical and computer engineering department at Dalhousie University has gained local prominence as one of the most ardent critics of the government's record in the energy business. "I'm not saying Nova Scotians are a cynical bunch, but they've been led down this path so many times," he says. "There are always the promises of a brighter tomorrow, but nothing ever seems to come of it."

THE SABLE Offshore Energy Program was supposed to change all that. It's named for Sable Island, a sandy crescent of land about 300 km s outheast of Halifax that has long been known as the Graveyard of the Atlantic because of its many shipwrecks. Sable became synonymous with natural gas in the 1990s when energy giants ExxonMobil and Shell Canada decided to pool six separate fields in the area into a single co-owned megaproject. As it neared completion, politicians and pundits could barely contain their enthusiasm. "Not since fish stocks were rich enough to almost stop a ship in its tracks has the offshore held so much economic promise for Nova Scotia," one local paper blared in July 1999.

Energy analysts and economists got swept up too.

Ever since 1983, the official estimate held that about 18 trillion cubic feet of gas is contained under the shallower waters of the Scotian shelf, based on seismic testing by the Geological Survey of Canada. In 2002, the Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board said that double that amount could be found if you included what may be below the deeper waters of the Scotian slope. Calgary-based energy consulting firm Ziff Energy Group then raised the ante again, calling current estimates for the Scotian shelf "conservative," and saying there could be 50 trillion cubic feet of gas in Nova Scotia's shallow waters alone. To put all of these numbers in perspective, one trillion cubic feet of gas is enough to heat about one million homes for five years. "Development of this emerging supply basin will aggressively continue throughout this decade," Ziff predicted.

That same year, the Conference Board of Canada produced a study predicting an economic bonanza for the province. The report projected that by 2020 Nova Scotia could have an unemployment rate of 4.5 per cent, the second lowest in the country behind energy-rich Alberta. It projected a $6.2-billion rise in the province's gross domestic product, and an 81-per-cent rise in personal disposable income, fuelling an $869-million surge in retail sales.

Just two years later, Hughes says, it appears those projections were "wildly optimistic."

By the end of 2002, the energy industry was getting worried. Two years had passed since EnCana hit gas in Deep Panuke, less than 50 km west of the Sable project, and there had been no major finds since. The failed wells were piling up—Queensland, Musquodobo it, Onondaga, Marquis—each drilled in shallow water within about 100 km of Sable, at an estimated cost of $30 million to $100 million. Through 2003 and 2004, the news kept getting worse, culminating last December with EnCana's decision to suspend development of Deep Panuke.

While some say it's nothing more than an extended run of bad luck, many in the industry have a darker outlook: there just isn't as much gas as some believed. "What the drilling has done is prove the fallacy of the resource estimates that had been touted since the 1990s," Doig says. "The figures were seriously out of whack."

Nova Scotia's one producing energy project, meanwhile, has had its own problems. When Sable was first envisioned, ExxonMobil and Shell Canada estimated reserves of 3.6 trillion cubic feet. That number has been twice scaled back, and in January of this year Shell reduced its reserve estimate for the Sable project to about 1.3 trillion cubic feet, roughly one third of the original estimate. As a result, a project that was expected to produce for 25 years could be exhausted in as little as 10 years from now. "The only thing saving Sable from being a complete disaster is the rise in commodity prices," Doig says. "If gas prices were US$2 [per 1,000 cubic feet], where most expected them to be, this thing would be dead in the water."

Slowing production levels at Sable have also cut into the royalties paid to the province. Through the first four years of the project, Nova Scotia collected just $38 million in royalty revenues. And in this year's budget,

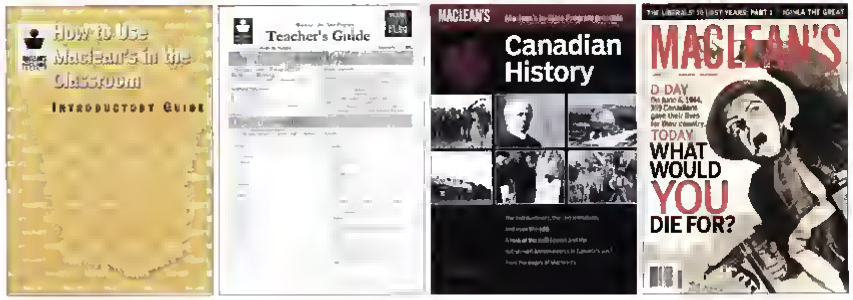


MacDonald is now philosophical about the industry's prospects

WHILE some blame a run of bad luck, many in the industry have a darker outlook: there isn't as much gas as predicted

PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN CALLIS

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ROGERS

the government trimmed its royalty forecast for the next two years as well "It's a pittance compared to what was promised and what was expected," Hughes says

And there are signs the industry has lost patience with the costly drilling failures In July, several companies allowed 13 exploration licences to lapse In December, another 10 permits are due to expire This summer, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers closed its Halifax office, saying expected drilling activity in the region didn't justify keeping it open

Through it all, Nova Scotia's energy minister, Cecil Clarke, remains upbeat "What we're seeing is the normal ebb and flow of the energy business," he says "The thing about expiring exploratory licences is, it's a business decision But none of the companies have said they're pulling up stakes and walking away We, as a government, have to be prepared to ride this wave Last year was a year for taking stock—a reality check But you always have to be optimistic in this business You don't want to cast a pall over the industry"

SOMEWHERE between the government's unsinkable optimism and Ian Doig's incessant fatalism stands Gordon MacDonald As special projects manager for the Regional Development Authority of Guysborough County, his primary responsibility since 1995 has been to help foster growth of the energy industry and attract jobs to the rural region that stands closest to the offshore fields of the Scotian Shelf Guysborough is really the epicentre of energy development, because it is where the pipeline from the Sable project comes ashore, and is home to the Coldboro gas plant, where natural gas is processed into marketable gas

MacDonald was born and raised in Guysborough County, and he knows there is an enormous amount riding on the success of the rigs Nowhere are the stakes more apparent than here In 2001, the county's unemployment rate was 23 per cent, and between 1996 and 2001 its population fell by 10 per cent In the three years since, things have gotten worse, MacDonald says, as the fishery has continued to decline, and the forestry industry employs fewer people

When gas first began to flow from the Sable project in 1999, he told a local newspaper that he felt as if he'd "died and gone to heaven" Almost five years later, MacDonald is still hopeful, but more philosophical about the industry's prospects "If you told me nine years ago that all this time would go by and we still wouldn't have a second project producing gas, I wouldn't have believed it," he says "But I've learned that 10 years isn't a long time in this business"



In 1998, when this photo was taken, Nova Scotia's future seemed brighter

MacDonald agrees that expectations were set too high, though Energy companies can drill wells on land in western Canada at a fraction of the cost of drilling in the offshore of Nova Scotia, he says, and this long dry spell makes the whole industry nervous "We know the easy wells are tapped Everything else that's out there is in the deep water and that means the wells will cost anywhere from $75 million to $90 million a pop," he says "That is not for the faint of heart, and companies aren't going to rush into it. But there's a herd mentality to this business And all it takes is one good discovery and everybody's going to be back in the pool."

After ExxonMobil abandoned the Cree well, the industry's hopes for that "next good discovery" were focused on Marathon Oil's Crimson well in the Annapolis Block There was hopeful talk that a successful find there could begin a domino effect and break the logjam that has stymied the industry for four years If Crimson had been a success, it may have encouraged EnCana to proceed with Deep Panuke And that, in turn, could have led to an expansion of the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline connecting Nova Scotia to the U S market, meaning hundreds more jobs and a renewed interest in exploration. Suddenly, all those rosy projections wouldn't seem so far-fetched But those hopes crumbled last week with news of Crimson's failure

The industry's proponents aren't giving up MacDonald admits he gets his hopes up on every major drilling program, and his hopes were higher than usual on Crimson. But despite all the setbacks, he says he'll keep working Bass Enterprises Production Co , the private exploration company owned by Texas's wealthy Bass clan, recently revealed its intention to drill up to three new wells in Nova Scotia waters, and that tells you something about the promise of the industry "As long as Nova Scotia is situated as close as we are to the north eastern U S , and its insatiable demand for energy, there will be interest here," MacDonald says "It doesn't matter if the next 10 wells are dry, there will always be people willing to drill $90 million gas wells here" As long as there is drilling, there is hope, but he knows the other side of that coin too Until there is a major find—or, better yet, several major finds—hope and promises may be all there is to hold on to M

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MADNESS, GREED & GOOGLE

Tech mania resurfaces as a search site goes public—for US$29.7 billion

STOP ME if you've heard this one before. an Internet company with a great brand name, cool design and charismatic management sells shares to the public and is instantly rewarded with a stratospheric valuation Small investors, with dollar signs in their eyes, can't get enough and bid the shares up even higher while market speculators hop in and out, making a mint off the frenzy If you're thinking this is the story of the late 1990s dot-com mania, you're right And if you're thinking it's the story of the past two weeks, you're right again.

Googlemania has arrived If you want to get in on this little party, it helps to have a short memory And lucky for Google, it appears many people do

Now, before you start screaming about how it's *different* this time, let us acknowledge that Google does have a far better business than most of the pooches that were brought to market in the late 1990s dot-com madness. The company had US$1.35 billion in revenue through the first six months of this year, which produced a bottom-line profit of US$143 million, both of which were sharply higher than last year Obviously, Google isn't a stinker like Pets com. But that doesn't mean it's a good stock pick, especially at more than US$100 a share

In its first three days of trading, Google shares rose 29 per cent, from an initial price of US$85 to US$109 40, and traded as high as US$113 48 On its first day on the Nasdaq, Google shares changed hands 22 3 million times, which is pretty amazing considering Google only sold 19 6 million shares in its offering In other words, the speculators and traders were having a field day hopping in and out of the stock as it climbed skyward, and for one blissful day on Wall Street it was like 1999 all over again By the end of trading on Aug 23, the company's market value was US$29 7 billion

SPECULATORS and traders had a field day hopping in and out of the stock as it climbed skyward, and for one blissful day on Wall Street it was like 1999 all over again

But as always, the hangover isn't so much fun Especially when you start to ask yourself questions like, is Google really worth US$30 billion? That's a tough number to wrap your head around Think of it this way it's substantially more than Nike, Gap, and Nextel Communications are worth, even though each of those companies had at least 10 times higher sales than Google did last year More importantly, it's 30 per cent more than General Motors Corp is worth, despite the fact that GM made a profit of US$3 8 billion last year That's twice as much *profit* as Google had *revenue* last year, and yet the search engine is worth billions more than the car maker.

And it's not just a wonky valuation ringing the alarm bells Google was conceived by founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin when they were university students at Stanford in the late 1990s. Nobody doubts their genius, but sometimes they seem to think they're still running the company out of a dorm room

Two weeks before its debut on the Nasdaq, the company revealed that it had issued 23 million shares and five million stock options to more than 1,000 current and former employees, but failed to register them with regulators as required by law That's the kind of little oversight that can get you slapped with million-dollar fines and lawsuits, and now the Securities and Exchange Commission is looking into the matter

Just as people were getting over that surprise, the latest issue of *Playboy* magazine hit newsstands, featuring an interview with Brin and Page That might not seem like a big deal, but when you're about to sell shares to the public, you generally do your talking exclusively through regulatory filings, to avoid the appearance of selective disclosure or inappropriate promotion of the stock. The company insists it didn't break any rules, but acknowledged it might face lawsuits from irritated investors Was the *Playboy* interview youthful naïveté, arrogance, or both? In 2001, Brin and Page hired industry veteran Eric Schmidt to be CEO and to impose some order on Google's organizational chaos Where was he when the founders decided to chat with *Playboy* just before filing a billion-dollar public offering?

Other problems run deeper Institutional Shareholder Services, a major U S advisory firm for big pension funds, roasted Google recently, identifying 21 weaknesses in the way the company is run For example, more than one third of the board of directors are either insiders or closely related to insiders, and an unequal share structure gives insiders like Brin and Page effective veto power over all major corporate decisions ISS gave Google a corporate governance score of 0 2 out of 100, worse than any company in Standard & Poor's 500

On top of it all, Google faces major challenges from Yahoo and Microsoft as those companies work to improve their Internet search technology

You'd think all this might make people think twice before hitting the "buy" button, but mundane issues like valuation, governance and professional management tend to get lost in the stampede when there's money to be made flipping tech stocks. Remember all those amateur day traders who lost a fortune when the tech bubble burst in 2000? They've been in rehab for a few years, but they just fell off the wagon

The question is what did we learn from the meltdown in technology stocks that gave us the worst bear market in recent history?

Google provides the answer meltdown? What meltdown? M

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A LENS ON THE WORLD

A prestigious contest exposes powerful images

A PICTURE may be worth a thousand words, but a great one can leave the viewer speechless. Case in point: any of a number of the winning photographs in the 47th annual World Press Photo contest that reflects the drama, chaos, and tragedy of 2003. Not surprisingly, the photo of the year comes from the war in Iraq. French photographer Jean-Marc Bouju captured his shot of an Iraqi prisoner comforting his four-year-old son at a U.S. army camp near Najaf.

The contest is one of the ways the independent, non-profit World Press Photo, founded in the Netherlands in 1955, fulfills its mandate of supporting and promoting professional press photographers the world over. It can be a daunting task: for 12 days in February, a panel of 14 international jurors judged 63,093 entries by 4,176 photographers from 124 countries. Among the winners and runners-up in 10 categories is Paul Nicklen, one of 78 Canadians who submitted photos, who took first prize in the nature story division.

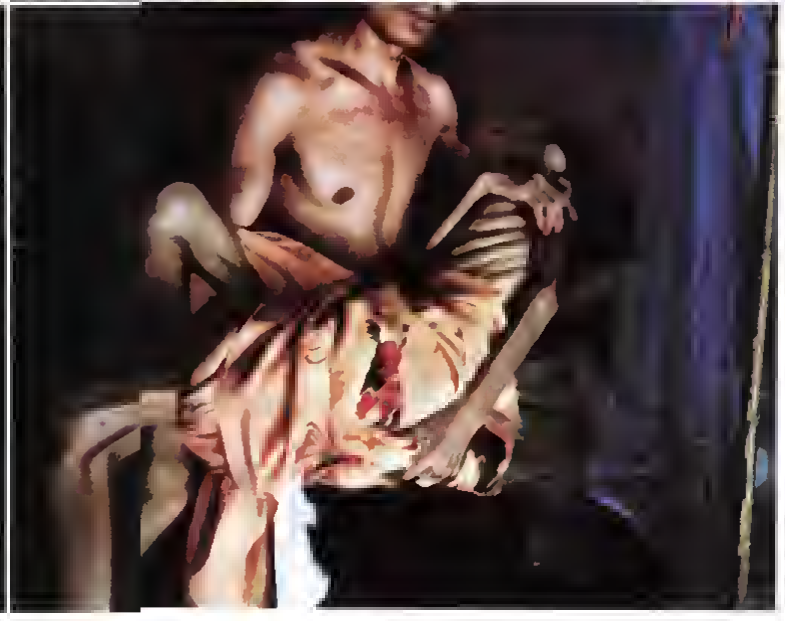
World Press Photo then puts together a yearbook of the winning shots. Published in five languages, it also serves as a catalogue for an exhibition of the photos that tours about 40 countries, including Canada. The exhibit will be at the Maison Frontenac in Montreal from Sept. 10 to Oct. 3. *Maclean's* is a sponsor of the Toronto stop, where the nearly 200 photos will be shown at the Allen Lambert Galleria Oct. 4-23. M

It is not known what happened to the Iraqi and his son after Bouju photographed them









Clockwise from top left
■ Russian **Yuri Kozyrev** won first prize (stories) in the general news category for his photos from the war in Iraq, including this one of a 12-year-old boy in a Baghdad hospital. When the picture was taken, the boy did not know that the rocket blast that had mutilated him also killed his parents, his brother and 11 other relatives.
■ American **Carolyn Cole** won third prize (singles) in the people in the news category for her picture of bodies in a mass grave in Liberia. The African country was wracked by civil war for more than a decade, which cost an estimated 250,000 lives
■ **Lu Guang** of China won first prize (stories) in the contemporary issues category for photos showing the toll AIDS has taken in Henan province. In the mid-1990s, poor villagers in eastern China sold their blood, but unsafe procedures resulted in many of them becoming infected with HIV. Chinese officials were slow to officially acknowledge the existence of the virus, and only today are local health authorities providing organized help. The peasant woman being held by her husband died two hours after this photograph was taken
■ **Jerry Lampen** of the Netherlands won first prize (singles), general news, for his photograph of a Palestinian woman being comforted by relatives after her husband's body was taken from their home in the Gaza Strip. The man and two others from the same family were shot by Israeli soldiers, who claimed Palestinian militants had approached a road used by soldiers and settlers.

PREVIOUS PAGE, JEAN MARC BOUJU/FRANCE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: YURI KOZYREV/RUSSIA/TIME MAGAZINE
CAROLYN COLE/USA/LOS ANGELES TIMES, LU GUANG/PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CH NA/GAMMA, JERRY LAMPEN/THE NETHERLANDS/
REUTERS NEWS PICTURES



WHAT PRICE EDUCATION?

Our university system is ailing and desperately needs a fix, writes PAUL WELLS

AS A RULE OF THUMB, it's rarely a good idea for governments to play Hood Robin, taking money from the poor so they can spend it on the rich. Yet that's what the government of Quebec is doing as it sets university tuition fees.

Like his counterparts across the country, Pierre Reid, Quebec's minister of education, needs more money in his colleges and universities. Like governments across the country, Quebec's has such a hard time staying out of deficit that it's limited in its ability to inject money from general revenues into its universities. So Reid has transformed $100 million worth of student bursaries, which students didn't have to repay, into loans, which they do.

Now try to follow his logic as he explains himself. "We made a societal choice, a political choice too, which is to have tuition fees frozen," Reid told *La Presse*. "Of course, passing the bill along to others would have meant increasing tuition fees and that is absolutely out of the question."

Well. Understand what's happening here. A government that wants to get money into its universities, but hasn't enough money lying around to do the job itself, has called on students to fill the gap. But instead of taking from the students who could most easily afford it—the ones who could have paid far more than Quebec's fees, the lowest in Canada at $1,862 in 2003-04—he's piling debt on those who can least afford it.

There has to be a better way. Provincial governments are struggling to find it. In the battle to keep their university systems competitive, they're considering whether low tuition rates are really the best way to maintain both accessibility and quality. The province that's about to become the centre of that debate is Ontario.

Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty announced a two-year freeze on tuition rates in April. But the McGuinty government has also appointed a committee, led by former NDP premier Bob Rae, to look into tuition and accessibility. The Rae review is scheduled to release a discussion paper in September and a final report in January. But a member of Rae's committee told *Maclean's* it will "unambiguously argue that the system does need more money" and that, while all Ontarians, through their government, must invest more heavily in post-secondary education, "tuition is going to have to go up."

Not surprisingly, student groups are upset by rumours that the Rae review will give McGuinty a pretext for raising fees. And it's absolutely true that a ballooning student debt load can be a burden for graduates and a deterrent for low-income students who are wondering whether to go to university. But a flurry of recent studies suggests Canada's absurdly complex and dysfunctional maze of student assistance programs could be made simpler and far more beneficial to the least affluent students, and that student debt isn't the only problem, nor necessarily even the worst problem, facing a post-secondary education system that's struggling to keep pace with the rest of the world.



Rae's committee will unambiguously argue that Ontario universities need more money

A study released on Aug. 17 by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation looked at tuition policy in four Canadian provinces and four countries—Ireland, the United Kingdom, Australia and the U.S. It suggests that many governments simply can't keep up with burgeoning student populations and the increasing cost of educating each student. Some hit a wall. Gary Doer's Manitoba government cut and then froze tuition after it was elected in 1999. But by 2001, as student populations grew, Manitoba found it couldn't keep spending as much on each student. With less money coming in and more students to teach, spending per student declined by 7.9 per cent and 4.4 per cent in 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Contrast that with what happened in England after Tony Blair introduced tuition fees in 1997. English universities were in nasty shape: between 1980 and 1997, the number of students had doubled, but spending per student had dropped by 40 per cent. Implementing tuition fees did nothing to slow the growth of the university population, but suddenly those students were bringing more money into the system, improving the quality of the university experience.

The Millennium Scholarship Foundation study suggests it's extremely hard to link tuition increases to enrolment levels: since the late 1990s, enrolment has grown in most jurisdictions, whether tuition costs are stable, rising or falling. A university education is just so valuable that students are willing to pay a lot more to get one. But of course not all of them can. While governments may be justified in taking more money from students who can pay, social justice also demands improvements to assistance for students who can't. A new study from the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) suggests that's more urgent in Canada than in most places.

Education is a provincial responsibility, but the federal government also intervenes heavily in student assistance. That patchwork of provincial and federal student-aid programs results in a Canadian system that "stands out even at the international level in terms of its complexity," the IRPP writes. That's a barrier to accessibility in itself: students who can't even figure out where to get money are less likely even to try.

The IRPP study suggests a simpler system of grants and loans, with the loans repaid from tax revenue after graduation. The Rae review will have other suggestions. What would be helpful is a federal-provincial meeting on the question. Health care isn't the only issue demanding attention from Canada's first ministers. It's time to get our universities, creaking under the weight of new demands, back onto the Canadian agenda. M

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINE MUSCHI; J.P. MOCZULSKI/THE GLOBE AND MAIL







ARNIE'S LAUNCH PAD

The Canadian Open, won by Palmer in 1955, celebrates its 100th birthday

IT WASN'T MUCH more than an afterthought. One hundred summers ago, when the Canadian Open made its debut under wet and mostly miserable conditions in Montreal, the one day tournament was tacked onto the end of the much more prestigious four-day Canadian Amateur Championship. There were only 17 Open entrants—seven amateurs and 10 professionals, who at the time were considered servants of their clubs, forbidden even to enter the clubhouse. The unheralded John Oke, the club pro at the Ottawa Golf Club, who had recently arrived from England, collected the first place prize of $60. The press was clearly underwhelmed with the new event. One major newspaper buried the results between the junior lacrosse standings and an advertisement for men's suspenders. "It was," says Karen Hewson, director of the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and Museum, "an inauspicious start."

Armour won in 1930 (top); Weir and Palmer have drawn huge crowds

Over the last century, however, all of golf's immortals have teed up at the Open, including Americans Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan, Walter Hagen, Sam Snead, Byron Nelson, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods, along with the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame contingent of Stan Leonard, George Knudson, Al Balding, Dave Barr and Moe Norman.

The tournament's early years were dominated by Canadians. International interest increased along with larger purses. (The current corporate underwriter is Bell Canada, which is promising US$756,000 to this year's winner on Sept. 12.)

The first big star to dominate the event was Tommy Armour, who captured the Canadian title three times between 1927 and 1936. A Scottish First World War hero who was blinded in his left eye at Ypres, Armour played his entire career with shrapnel in his shoulder. He was also a legendary imbiber, but became one of the game's most famous instructors.

For Palmer, the Open launched his stunning career, which includes seven victories in the so-called major tournaments. Going into the 1955 event, Palmer, then 25, was a golfing gypsy. He and his wife were criss-crossing the continent to tournaments by car, just scraping together enough to pay for the gas. That all changed at the Weston Golf and Country Club in Toronto, where Palmer topped the leader board and claimed his first PGA tournament victory, worth $2,400. The win springboarded Palmer into public consciousness and heralded a more popular era for the sport. Fittingly, for the man with the blacksmith-sized forearms and movie star charisma, that 1955 Open was the first tournament to be broadcast on TV across Canada.

Lee Trevino, who endured the kind of hardscrabble upbringing that would make even Charles Dickens blanch, in 1971 became the very first golfer to win the game's then Triple Crown, capturing the U.S., Canadian and British titles. Trevino won the Canadian leg in Montreal despite some local distractions. "These French girls in their hot pants are driving me crazy," reported Trevino, then aged 31.

WHEN Tiger Woods jetted into Toronto for the 2000 Open, he had reached the golfing version of a state of grace



In Montreal, Trevino won despite distractions from 'these French girls in their hot pants'

When Tiger Woods jetted into Toronto for the 2000 Open, he had reached the golfing version of a state of grace. That season, he won three major titles and nine tournaments overall. The last was the Open at the Glen Abbey Golf Club outside Toronto. However, instead of the expected coronation, Woods was forced to produce a last-minute flourish of wonder. Tied for the lead going into the par-five final hole, he sent his drive into a fairway bunker. In front of a gallery of 50,000 raucous fans, the prodigy calmly ground his feet in the sand and then blasted a six iron 213 yards over water to within 18 feet of the hole. A chip and putt later for a birdie gave Woods the win.

But the tournament's history also has its heartaches. On the third day of the 1983 Open, also at Glen Abbey, Andy Bean tapped his putt on the 15th hole into the cup with the end of his club. That violated the rules, and Bean received a two-stroke penalty. The next day, he fired a course record 62—but missed a playoff by two strokes.

Now, as the Open begins its second century, the tournament is more popular than ever. Last year, 125,000 fans went wild for homegrown star Mike Weir. After the tournament Weir, who finished 10th, said, "I don't think I've ever had so many standing ovations as I got this week. They'd cheer me when I walked to the range, when I warmed up, on every tee and green—they even cheered me when I came out of the Port O Let."

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FROM "THE OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP OF CANADA, 1904-2004, A CENTURY OF CHAMPIONS" PUBLISHED BY KEY PORTER BOOKS (TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT); RYAN REMIORZ/CP

FROM "THE OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP OF CANADA, 1904-2004 A CENTURY OF CHAMPIONS" PUBLISHED BY KEY PORTER BOOKS









Over the years—pictures here are from 1990 to this year s July pilgrimage—Simon has photographed those drawn to the lake's positive energy

They come from as far away as Europe to be healed—physically, spiritually and emotionally

WATERS FOR THE SPIRIT

Lac Ste. Anne draws thousands of pilgrims

WHEN AWARD-WINNING photojournalist Steve Simon first visited Lac Ste Anne, about 70 km west of Edmonton, in 1988, he was immediately captivated He felt, he says, a positive spiritual energy Countless others have felt it too The Cree—one of a number of Native peoples drawn to its shores for ceremonial gatherings—called it *Manito Sakahigan*, or Lake of the Spirit An early Catholic missionary, Father Jean-Baptiste Thibault, realized the site would make a good base, and in 1844 he blessed the lake and renamed it in honour of the mother of Mary and grandmother of Jesus The new name was auspicious—the grandmother is an important figure in Native culture In 1889, Lac Ste Anne was the site of a pilgrimage, and the practice of making a journey to a sacred place to seek blessing from God became a tradition

Today, the annual gathering is the largest event of its kind in North America, and some critics argue the July pilgrimage has become too commercialized. But many who go to the lake do so for the reasons people always have—to seek healing in the waters and to renew their faith Simon has returned often, in hopes of capturing the aura and mystery of the event A sampling of his photographs



IS THIS CUP HALF EMPTY?

World tourney misses some stars and the old geopolitics, CHARLIE GILLIS writes

JONATHAN HAYWARD/CP

FOR A SECDND, it felt like old times. Two days into training camp at the World Cup of Hockey, Pat Quinn, coach of Team Canada, told reporters he was seeking "traitors" in Europe to spy on his opponents—anything to get an edge on the dastardly Russians or Czechs. It was a delightful bit of hokum, summoning a time when geopolitics coloured every on-ice encounter between Canadians and Soviets. It was also a sad reminder: without the Cold War plot lines to stir us, is the World Cup of Hockey worth watching?

Find out in the next two weeks. The tournament, which is organized jointly by the National Hockey League and the NHL Players' Association, is now 13 years removed from its precursor, the Canada Cup. And the ghosts of series past can be awfully hard to top. Between 1972 and 1991, fans on both sides of the Atlantic were treated to six great clashes of styles and on-ice philosophy, underlaid with the political drama of the period. In those days, it was democracy against totalitarianism, the dash of Lafleur versus the genius of Kharlamov, and, frankly, a little pre-tournament espionage wouldn't have been out of the question.

Canada and the U.S. enhanced their rivalry by splitting a pair of exhibition games

Fast-forward one generation, and almost every international-calibre Russian player is hauling down a seven-figure NHL salary. Most happily nosh with their North American teammates, and an increasing number view the Stanley Cup as their ultimate prize. To complicate matters, professional players have twice been invited to the Winter Olympics, which forced the World Cup into an eight-year hiatus after its 1996 debut. "I think the Olympics have replaced the Canada and World Cups as the ultimate barometer of hockey supremacy," says Joe Pelletier, co-author of a history book on the summit tournaments, from the 1972 classic up to the modern World Cup. "European players grow up dreaming of the gold medal just like North American kids dream of the Stanley Cup."

Maybe that's why players haven't exactly been breaking down the arena doors to get into this tournament. As Team Canada practised at the University of Ottawa last week, the no-shows were as conspicuous as the newcomers, most notably the physical defensive tandem of Rob Blake and Chris Pronger. The oft-injured but supremely talented Mario Lemieux *was* there, but not the recuperating Steve Yzerman—to some the team's heart and soul. The Americans, Czechs and Swedes have all lost key players, too, while no fewer than five Russians have decided not to play for their team.

Most of the absentees have blamed nagging injuries or, if they're free agents, insurance concerns. But others seem to lack the old-time hockey spirit that you'd expect from players given the opportunity to represent their countries. The Russians, for instance, appear to be simply avoiding a team in disarray (goaltender Nikolai Khabibulin described the squad as "total chaos"). A few, however, acknowledge that between the NHL, the Olympics and the annual International Ice Hockey Federation championships in Europe, they've simply been playing too much. Sami Kapanen, a speedy Finn who plays for the Philadelphia Flyers and represented his country at the 2002 Winter Games, passed on the World Cup because of

'YOU'RE playing a lot of hockey over the years when you're counting these events. I guess you get the rest when you can.'

JIM YOUNG/REUTERS

'IT WAS TIME TO SPEAK UP'

We waited a while to see it, but at the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Wayne Gretzky finally showed his dark side. With the players he'd hand-picked in his role as Team Canada's executive director under fire for tepid play, the Great One unleashed a post-game torrent of nationalistic vitriol, summing up the criticism as a "crock of crap." The diatribe bore echoes of Phil Esposito's soliloquy in defence of his beleaguered teammates during the 1972 Summit Series against the Soviets. It also solidified Gretzky's place as spiritual leader of Canadian hockey: buoyed by their leader's words, the Canadians bounced back to take Olympic gold. Now the director of Canada's World Cup team, Gretzky talked to CHARLIE GILLIS about patriotism, politics and the great frozen game.

You've become a kind of rainmaker in Canadian hockey since Salt Lake. How does that sit with you?

We're taught at a very young age in Canada that it's an exciting thing to represent your country. I think whether you're a manager, a coach, a player or part of the training staff, you're always honoured to be involved in one of these events. It's a thrill.

Did you *mean* to sound like Esposito during that post-game news conference in 2002?

Nah. There was a combination of things that led up to what I said. As a group, we were starting to feel the pressure that had been on us since the start of the Games. You could feel it in the locker room. So it wasn't planned; it was one of those things that just happens. There had been a late hit in the game on one of our players, and Canadian hockey had been taking cheap shots for years in the European media. I just thought it was time to speak up.

Are there too many world tournaments in elite hockey?

It's something you'd want to ask the players. For me, I guess it comes down to this: when I call up players to tell them I want them to be part of Team Canada, each one is genuinely thrilled by the offer. They seem to relish it, whatever the tournament. So at this point, I'd say no.

Is it true you were one of three players who turned up for a team luncheon with [then-prime minister] Pierre Trudeau after the 1981 Canada Cup?


The rainmaker

Yeah, but I don't know if I want to go there. It makes everybody look bad. You have to understand that we'd gone to camp in June for that tournament, so we'd been [in Montreal] for seven or eight weeks, and everybody had made arrangements to go home. I just happened to be one of the guys not racing to get out of town. It turned out to be a nice luncheon with the prime minister. I was there with Larry Robinson. I think Butch Goring showed up, too.

When you played with him on Team Canada in 1987, could you have imagined being Mario Lemieux's manager?

Ha, ha. No, you don't think that far ahead. I wasn't even on a line with Mario until [coach] Mike Keenan put us together about three-quarters of the way through that tournament. So I guess things can change a lot.



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In exhibition play, Lemieux looked fully recovered from a debilitating hip injury

exhaustion. Even the indefatigable Scott Niedermayer, who's been wearing the maple leaf in tournaments since his junior days, is feeling the effects. "You're playing a lot of hockey over the course of four, five or six years when you're counting these events," said the veteran Canadian defenceman after practice in Ottawa. "It's exciting to be part of them. I guess you get the rest when you can."

The good news for organizers is that fans are bearing up as well as Niedermayer—for now. This month's eight-team event kicks off with an NHL lockout in the offing, so the die-hards are soaking up as much puck as they can get. And in Canada, nothing produces buzz like hockey stars. Last week, autograph hounds clad in red jerseys lined the barricades around the University of Ottawa Sports Complex, hoping to catch a peek of their heroes leaving practice. Kathleen Desmarais, 36, used her cellphone camera to get a snapshot of Joe Sakic. "This feels more at home, they're closer to us," she said when asked how the World Cup compares to the Olympics. "It's more of an event where people can get glimpses of them here and there, whereas when they're at the Olympics, they're farther away. I think this is better."

IF THE Canadians and Americans falter, the Russians, Swedes, Finns or Czechs could win this month's championship

There are even a few new plot lines. Wayne Gretzky, a fixture on Team Canada during the '80s and '90s and architect of the current squad, increasingly sees the Americans as Canada's greatest foe, a theory affirmed last week when the U.S. beat Canada 3-1 in an exhibition match. "That Canada-Soviet rivalry was something the Canadian public geared themselves to watch," Gretzky told *Maclean's*. "Now it's more of a Canada-U.S. rivalry, and I think Canadian fans are appreciating that the American hockey system has gotten a lot better in the last decade. Personally, I expect it to get better in the future." If the Americans falter, he added, as many as four other teams—the Russians, Swedes, Finns or Czechs—could step forward to win this month's championship.

It's not quite the stuff of John le Carré novels. Or, for that matter, the most ho-hum of Canada Cups. But with the NHL now voicing doubts about allowing players to attend the 2006 Winter Games in Turin, Italy, the World Cup may finally be getting its chance. If a lockout drags into January, NHL commissioner Gary Bettman has said, players won't be attending the Olympics. The next meaningful international tournament, then, would be another World Cup, where scores would be settled, rivalries renewed and new grudges born. In the absence of geopolitical conflict, that's about all a hockey fan can ask. M

JIM YOUNG/REUTERS

INTERNET GUIDE

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BY KEN MACQUEEN



LOWERING THE BAR

With a small team raised in an era of tight money and organizational disarray, Canada's medal tally took a tumble—as expected

THERE'S A HILL in the Vouliagmeni triathlon course outside Athens that starts slowly, then gets worse as it climbs away from the blue Saronic Gulf into a prime residential section and a world of hurt. The final 200 m are a 20-per cent grade, as extreme an incline as any of Canada's five Olympic triathletes have seen. The course required cresting this beast five times during the 40 km bike portion of the race—after a 1,500 m swim and before a 10 km run.

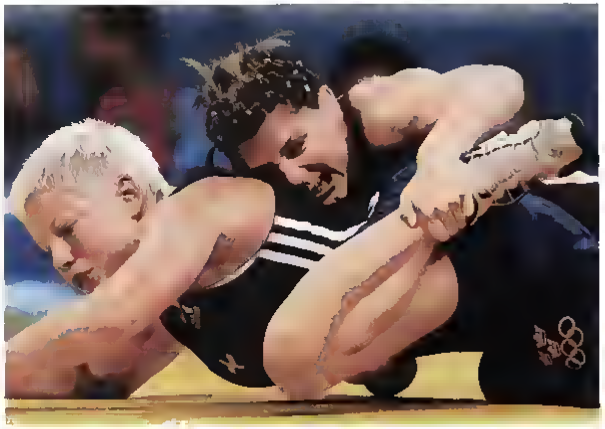
The course here was not kind to Canadians. The best triathlon showing was an 11th place finish by Simon Whitfield, who'd won gold four years ago at the 2000 Summer Games in Sydney. He blamed a "tactical error" he made on that hill in letting a lead pack of cyclists slip away early in the race, "when I probably shoulda rode up," he said with a tired grin. "Coulda, shoulda, woulda—that doesn't work, does it?"

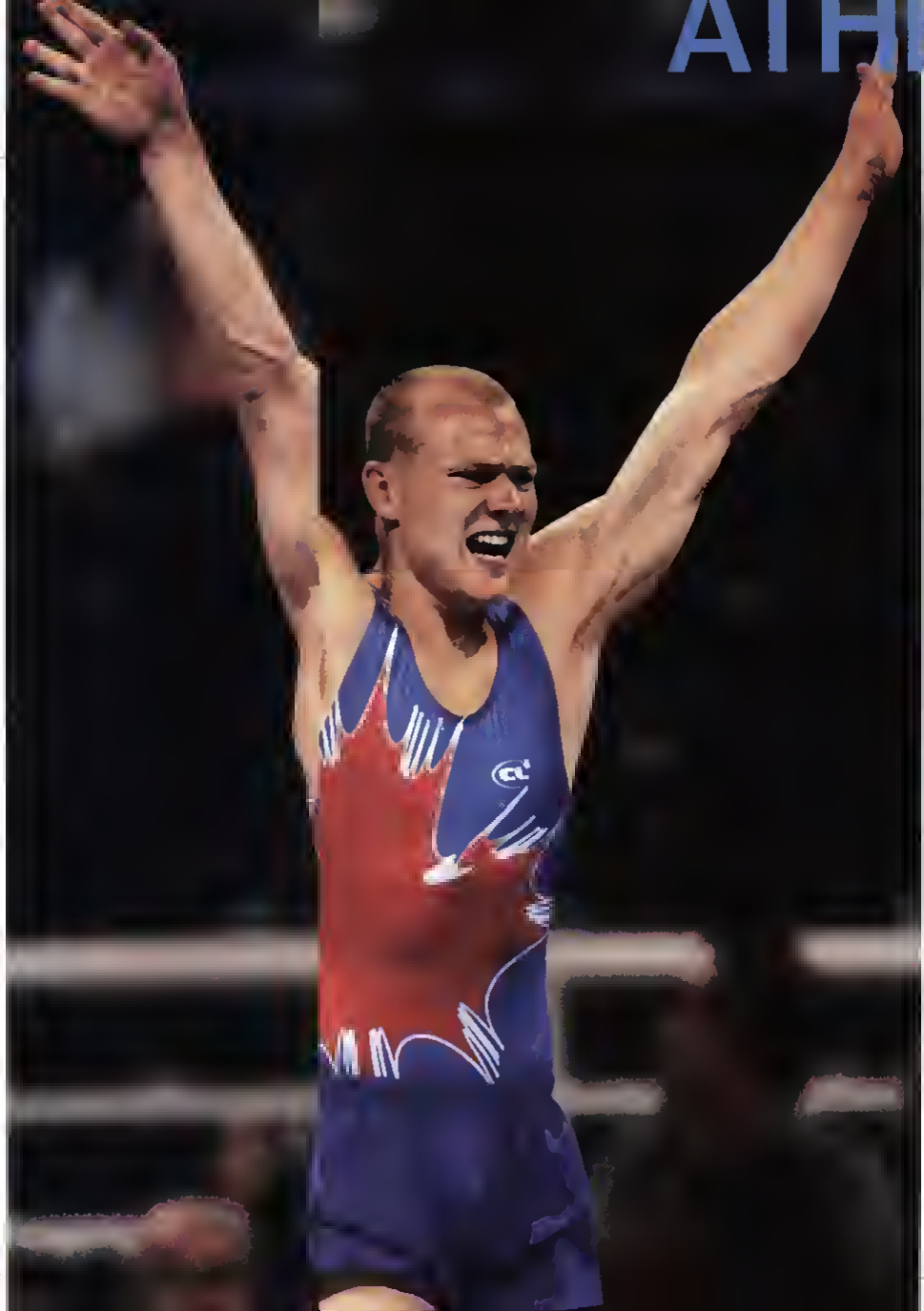
Under pressure, Shewfelt and Verbeek delivered stirring medal performances

Well, it's not the Olympic ideals of faster, higher, stronger, but coulda, shoulda, woulda figured prominently in the post-event analysis of many a crestfallen Canadian. These Games were an uphill slog for most of the nation's 267 Olympians here. By Saturday, though, the Canadians fought back. Mountain biker Marie-Hélène Prémont won silver. Sailors Ross Macdonald and Mike Wolfs took silver in the Star class. And kayaker Adam van Koeverden grabbed gold and bronze in the K1 500 and 1000, while teammate Caroline Brunet paddled to bronze in the women's K1 500.

The medal showing was about what most seasoned observers expected in Athens from a small team that has grown up during a period of funding cutbacks and organizational disarray in many sport federations. But it left Canada with fewer than half the medals needed to reach the ridiculously optimistic goal of an eighth-place finish set by Canadian Olympic Committee president Michael Chambers. It wasn't until Day 14, in fact, that Canada finally overtook the amphibious Michael Phelps, the U.S. swimmer who took home a total of eight medals of his own.

That got people talking. "Canada, Russia producing excuses not results," read a headline in the *Athens News* in a report on two under-performing teams. "The nation's Olympic theme has been Woe, Canada," said *Philadelphia Inquirer* writer Frank Fitzpatrick, who noted with painful accuracy that Australia is near the top of the medal count despite a population one-third smaller than Canada's. Those darned Aussies prey on many Canadian minds, including head triathlon coach Lance Watson, whose international stable of clients includes a number of the world's best racers. "We've got the same set of genetic goods," he says. "I just wonder if we're happy to be here and to let other people do great things." He poses a question that's nagged the national team for two sweat-soaked weeks. "What is it about the Canadian sports psyche," Watson asks, "that's not rising to the challenge here at the Olympics?"





The answer lies somewhere within, for the Greeks offered no room for excuses. The Games were a brilliant success as the closing ceremony approached. The heat was hardly out of line for an Athenian summer. The venues were top rate. And the amiable and magnanimous hosts proved willing to forgive the International Olympic Committee and much of the sporting world for harbouring doubts that the Athens Organizing Committee could manage much more than a souvlaki stand. True, there were the inevitable judging controversies, not of Greece's making, and three of its athletes were caught up in doping scandals. But other Greek heroes rose in their stead to surpass the medal count of certain larger and more prosperous countries that could be named.

> **Giddy track cyclist Lori-Ann Muenzer, 38, of Edmonton, won cycling gold in the women's sprint.**
> **What it feels like to win: "I would say that this means the world to me, but I think it actually means the universe."**
> **On her advanced age: "It's just a number on my driver's licence."**
> **If her smile was any bigger: "I'd probably swallow my head."**

To be sure, Canada achieved its own stellar performances, made all the more remarkable as the national pressure mounted daily for something to cheer about. Kyle Shewfelt, 22, delivered Canada's first gold—and the country's first-ever artistic gymnastics medal—in a nearly flawless floor exercise, despite an ankle injury that left him unable to practise his routine all spring. Up in the stands, armed with lucky charms, his family and friends erupted in elation and relief. His girlfriend Melissa Mitzner, a provincial-level gymnastics coach in Calgary, knows better than most the sweat and sacrifice it had taken to get to Athens. "I knew as soon

PREVIOUS PAGE: KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/AP; EKETHER ENDILCHER/AP; ADRIAN WYLD/CP

as I watched his last tumbling line," she said, fingering a lucky necklace given to her the day before by an Athenian shopkeeper. "I was like, 'Oh my God, we got it!'" His mother, Nola, had the priceless privilege of seeing her son achieve a lifelong dream. Father Wes, a man of few words this most special of evenings, said simply: "I'll never listen to the national anthem again without thinking of that moment."

For a brief time last week, it looked as if he'd inspired a roll. Later that night at the track, Montreal's Chantal Petitclerc won gold in the wheelchair 800 m, a demonstration event. "Before my race, Perdita Felicien and some other Canadian athletes came over to encourage me," Petitclerc said. "In their eyes, I'm an Olympian." The next day wrestler Tonya Verbeek surprised most everyone but parents Jerry and Kathy with a silver medal performance. It was her mom and dad's first overseas trip ever, and for it to culminate in a medal was almost beyond imagining. "People don't know what it takes to get to the top of your sport," said Jerry, who has worked 28 years at Hamilton's Dofasco steel mill. "There's a lot of sacrifice in it."

A day later, Lori-Ann Muenzer, a canny veteran cyclist, won gold and the future looked as bright as the Athenian sky. Then the sun went down.

That night, top-ranked Alexandre Despatie, 19, flirted with disaster before salvaging Canada's first-ever men's diving medal, a silver, with a brilliant closing performance on the three-metre springboard. But in the span of a half hour, the wheels fell off the wagon: pole vaulters Stephanie McCann and Dana Ellis were brought down to earth in the finals by two Russians who seem to exist in a world without gravity. The Canadian baseball team, fighting for a spot in the gold medal game, succumbed to the Cubans, the eventual tournament winners, in the semi-finals. The next day the Canadians lost bronze to the Japanese. The chance to wear a Canadian uniform had to be consolation enough for veteran minor-leaguer Andy Stewart. "It's just an unbelievable feeling," he said, "to play for the name on the front of your jersey instead of the one on your back."



So close to gold, the usually steady Heymans suffered a crushing letdown

> Rower Andrew Hoskins, 28, of Edmonton, reflects on his future after the devastating fifth-place finish by the men's heavyweight eight: "I've got to start thinking about that. I haven't got a dime in the bank. There's no way we're going to buy a house anytime soon, and I would love for my son to have a backyard. These are sacrifices that are beyond just me. If I continue to row, maybe I'm just being selfish."

Against the backdrop of these travails, world champion 100-m hurdler Perdita Felicien lined up in the starting blocks for the race of her life. The winning time, for American Joanna Hayes, was an Olympic record 12.37 seconds. For Felicien the race lasted perhaps two seconds, until she crashed into the first hurdle, knocking down Russian Irina Shevchenko as she fell. Two Olympic dreams died that night.

Felicien's anguish was palpable as she met later with an uncharacteristically gentle group of Canadian reporters with no stomach to add to notebooks already full of tears and hurt. She'd seen so many athletes at their peak fall short at Games—only days before, tower diver Emilie Heymans was in contention for gold but fell into fourth place with a weak final dive. "I've always said that's not me. I won't be that person. I've always said for my end to come like this is not my destiny. This is not my fate," Felicien said with an angry shrug. "Little did I know, right?" At once gracious and determined, she vowed to be back for the 2008 Games in Beijing. "I'm going to go home and bawl my eyes out," she said, "but you better believe they're going to have a force to reckon with these next four years."

Canadian sport needs its own equivalent of a good cry. Both Canada and Australia had dismal finishes after the 1976 Summer Games in Montreal. Australians went home and committed resources and political will to rebuilding as a summer sporting power. Canada bumbled along with bandages and bureaucratic studies.

> A sombre Diane Cummins, 30, of Victoria, the world's seventh-ranked 800-m runner going into Athens, after failing to qualify for the final: "People at home, you know, just love us. We're trying as hard as we can. We don't want to fail. And if we fail, we don't want you to make us feel like we disappointed you. No one wants to disappoint anyone. Especially at the Olympic Games."

More will surely follow. Sports Minister Stephen Owen, visiting athletes earlier in the Games, spoke of an extra $30 million committed this year to amateur sport funding. Many sports administrators fear another temporary fix, when what's needed is stable funding and a coherent strategy. If past practice holds, temporary Olympic fans will have already tuned back to the high-priced talent of professional sport. Reports will be written. Politicians will move on.

The athletes themselves will retire, or return to varying degrees of obscurity, penury and sacrifice. Back at the triathlon course, Brent McMahon looks forward to a month off after battering his 23-year-old body to the point of injury just to qualify for these Games. He'll celebrate with a leg operation. Whitfield will marry fiancée Jennie Sprigings, help build their organic farm on B.C.'s Salt Spring Island and do grassroots evangelism for his sport. Jill Savege—who wiped out when her bike slipped on a grease slick—will nurse a chewed up thigh and a ripped-up shoulder. Her Olympics were reduced to this: finishing that damn race when pain and common sense dictated otherwise.

In four years, they, or others like them, will be at the Beijing Games to confront whatever hills or hurdles or opponents their sports provide. As mundane as it sounds, they'll have already triumphed over greater obstacles: doubts and debt, public indifference and the prospect of failure. You see that in the winners here, and in the losers, too.

ON THE WEB For our complete 2004 Summer Games coverage, including reader polls, photo gallery and wrap up, visit *www.macleans.ca/athens2004*

PAUL CHIASSON/CP

KAYAKING

BY JONATHON GATEHOUSE

Not just happy to be there

WHEN THERE was no one left to beat in Canada, Adam van Koeverden went looking for the rest of the world. Digging deep into his own pockets a couple of years back, the 22 year-old Oakville, Ont., kayaker flew to Australia for the winter, to Europe for the summer and then to Florida for another winter. He became a full-time paddling nomad, crashing on the floors of any member of the sport's elite who would agree to take him on as a training partner. He absorbed their lessons, and then started handing out his own. When he finished second at last year's world championships, the Norwegians got wise, telling him he was "too dangerous" to keep hanging around. In Athens, they were proven right.

Standing dockside early on the Games' final Saturday, van Koeverden closed his eyes, drew a deep breath and took the biggest step of his life—to the top of the Olympic podium as the men's K1 500 m gold medalist. "The feeling is indescribable," he said. "I just savoured it." Twenty-four hours before, he'd lifted his teammates' spirits with a hard-won bronze in the K1 1,000 m. But that race wasn't perfect, there was something left to prove in the 500. "I remember lining up and thinking, 'You're not done yet. You can do better.'" Second out of the start, van Koeverden windmilled down a choppy course, catching Nate Baggaley of Australia in the final 100 m to claim victory by half a kayak length.

With 10 boats and every single member of the Canadian squad advancing to finals here, the pressure was on the canoeists and kayakers to pump up the nation's anemic medal count. The cocky van Koeverden had challenged his teammates to aspire to more than the "ultra-Canadian" goal of simply making the Olympic cut. They tried gamely, but in the end, only he and the veteran Caroline Brunet of Lac Beauport, Que., were able to raise their games.

Brunet, a five-time Olympian, took bronze in the women's 500 m sprint but her mood



Brunet's bronze was bittersweet, while van Koeverden's victory was just plain sweet

was anything but celebratory. Having already won silvers in Atlanta and Sydney, the 35-year-old came out of retirement for one last shot at Olympic gold, the only prize that eluded her grasp over a stellar two-decade career. At the medal ceremony, she moved like a sleepwalker, momentarily hesitating in front of the podium's second-place spot before being gently directed to the lowest step. "I don't believe in destiny," she said solemnly. "I don't think it exists anymore."

A convincing win in the heats had given Brunet hope the stars might finally be aligning. But when a howling wind woke her at 2:30 a.m. on the day of the finals, Brunet, whose strengths are greatest on flat, calm water, knew she was in trouble. "I felt like getting up and writing about it," she says. By race time, the weather was slightly calmer, but the breeze was still stiff enough to push her kayak diagonally at the gate, and cost her a fast start. She clawed her way up to third place, but was never able to catch the gold winner, Natasa Janics, of Hungary, and the silver medallist, Josefa Idem of Italy. Brunet had one more chance at gold, in the K2 500-m final with fellow Quebecer Mylanie Barré, but placed seventh. The quest for gold is now definitively over, she says. "I'm of a kayaking generation that's on its final metres."

The three-medal haul is Canada's best canoe-kayak tally since the 1984 Los Angeles Games. With the torch now passed to van Koeverden and other young paddlers, there is a sense the team will be even stronger come 2008. Veteran Attila Buday, who along with his brother Tamas Jr. placed eighth in the C2 500 m, says van Koeverden's mental toughness should serve as an inspiration. "A lot of people sort of crumble at the Olympics, and they can't do what they have to do," Buday says. "But Adam just came and kicked butt."

The newly minted Olympic champion, who returns to his kinesiology studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., this fall, says he has at least one more Summer Games in his future. "It would be hard to go back and motivate myself to train if I had won *two* golds," he says. "But I didn't." That's bad news for the rest of the world. A guy as dangerous as van Koeverden doesn't need any extra motivation. M



PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD KOROL, ANDRE FORGET/COC/CP

DIVING



BY JONATHON GATEHOUSE

Some strange twists of fate

TWO ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME comebacks in one week were a little much to ask for. Two in one evening proved a request beyond all reason. Diver Alexandre Despatie conjured one silver medal from thin air in Athens, but his newfound powers failed him on the Games' final Saturday. Heading into the final round of the men's 10-m platform in a dead heat—42/100ths of a point separated the top three competitors—the 19-year-old Montrealer seemed perfectly positioned to cement his status as one of the diving world's clutch performers. But on a night where the title ended up being decided by misses rather than hits, Despatie made one error too many, finishing a heartbreaking fourth.

Red-faced—from the force of repeatedly plunging three storeys into a pool, rather than embarrassment—a sombre Despatie, the world 10-m champion in 2003, tried to put his frustration into words. "Sometimes in competition you get excited and you want it a little too much," he said. "Maybe that's what happened. I don't know. But I'll remember it for a long time. It was a bad day." In almost a carbon copy of the men's 3-m springboard competition, Despatie struggled early in the final, failing to cleanly land his second dive, a mind-boggling front 4½ somersault. And like his silver-medal performance, he stormed back, earning three perfect 10s on his next dive. But this time he couldn't sustain the effort. A poor fourth dive dropped him out of the medals. His competitors, two Chinese and an Australian, never gave him another opportunity to climb back onto the podium.

Despatie came back brilliantly in the springboard, but fell short on the tower

It was a disappointing end to an Olympics that held so much promise for the Canadian team, which hoped to break the Chinese dominance of the sport. In his 3-m comeback—Despatie nailed his final three dives to dig himself out of a deep hole and steal the silver medal—Canada's coaches had seen the great leap forward that they had been an-

PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD KOROL

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A belated date with gold-medal glory

CYCLING

BY JONATHON GATEHOUSE AND KEN MACQUEEN

ticipating since Despatie burst onto the world scene as a skinny 13-year-old, winning a Commonwealth gold in Kuala Lumpur in 1998. Fourth on the 10-m tower in Sydney—edged out of a medal by Dmitri Sautin, the Russian diving legend he relegated to bronze in the Athens springboard—he seemed to lack only an Olympic medal to mark him as one of the sport's elite. Michel Larouche, who has worked with Despatie since he was five, says the diver has all the calling cards of a champion—talent, spirit and will—but needs to prove it on a consistent basis. "Alex was the only one not diving at the calibre he can do it," he said after the 10-m final. "It would have changed the entire competition."

Instead, the dream comeback ended up as a short-lived reverie between nightmare 10-m tower competitions. In the women's event, Emilie Heymans, a 22-year old from St-Lambert, Que., who is renowned for her sang-froid on the tower, had gold within her grasp going into the final dive. She was just 4.68 points behind the eventual winner, Chantelle Newbery of Australia. With everything on the line, Heymans, the 2003 world champion, over rotated on a back 2½ somersault 1½ twist, slapping the water and sinking her medal hopes. "I choked," she later told reporters. An NBC camera crew followed the diver as she calmly walked off the pool deck into the changing area where, out of sight of her fans and coaches, she collapsed to her knees and bawled. A fourth-place finish to add to the bronze she captured with Blythe Hartley in the 10-m synchro event was no consolation. "I blew my chance, and there's nothing that you can do about it. That's the worst thing," says Heymans, who is uncertain if she wants to put herself through the grinder at a third Olympic Games. "You just have to go forward."

Two medals in the diving pool, instead of the hoped-for three or four, is a disappointment that will stick with the team over the next four years. Despatie won't get the triumphant Olympic homecoming he was dreaming of. "It's going to be a whole lot different. It's going to be hard to see their faces and to see what people have to say," he said. "But you know, I do dive for myself. This time didn't go like I wanted, but there'll be a next time." M

BY THE TIME Lori-Ann Muenzer made it to the Olympic finals, her good-luck ritual had become such an elaborate dance that, if set to music, it could qualify for federal arts funding. An intricate series of fist bumps, shoulder chucks and laying of hands built up over three days of competition, until all of the coaches and trainers and officials who hovered around Canada's lone track cyclist had a role. And as she teetered on the starting line, a 12 second sprint away from gold, one last refinement: the 38-year old legal secretary from Edmonton reached down to the man steadying her bike—national team coach Eric Van den Eynde—and gently rubbed his Mr. Clean pate.

It worked. Muenzer powered past Tamilla Abassova of Russia, a woman 17 years her junior, at a speed of just over 59 km/h, to win Canada's first-ever cycling gold. Whether it was luck or simply the combination of her canny tactics and bulging thighs, when it counted the most, she was ageless and clearly unbeatable. "This week is the fittest I have ever been, the fastest I have ever been, the strongest I have ever been, and also the smartest I have ever been," said Muenzer.



For Muenzer on the track and Prémont on the trail, gold and silver tasted great

In the semi finals, she took down Australia's Anna Meares, a 20-year-old who won gold and set a world record in the 500-m time trial just days earlier. On her desk back home in Edmonton, Muenzer has a picture of the race she lost to Meares earlier this year at the world championship in Melbourne, Australia—a photo finish. Now she can replace it with a shot of herself being crowned with the Olympic victor's laurels, eyes filling with tears as the Canadian flag was raised to the rafters. "Standing on the podium was such an amazing thing," said Muenzer. "You think about it, you dream about it, but the reality of it happening is pretty slim. Standing there singing the national anthem you sang when you were a kid in school. Wow. It just means so much."

As soon as the gold was placed around her neck, Muenzer reached inside the top of her blue-and red cycling jersey and pulled out another medallion: the University of Alberta's prize for the top pharmacology student of 1976—Brenda Miller. A friend and supporter, Miller was killed in a cycling accident two years ago. Her husband, Jack McCutcheon, gave it to Muenzer and it became her most powerful inspiration and a constant keepsake on the road. "As soon as I'm in the car on the way to the airport, I put it on," she said. "And it stays on until I come home."

It's been a long haul for Muenzer, a 13-time Canadian champion. She had won silver and bronze at past world championships and Commonwealth Games, but had never before topped an international podium. A broken collarbone and bouts of tendinitis in both knees cost her a place on the Canadian team in Atlanta in 1996. Other injuries and crashes—including a spectacular backwards plunge off a six-metre high cliff while mountain biking in 1999—hobbled her preparations for Sydney, where she finished 13th in the 500-m time trial. Most would have been happy just to have qualified for Sydney, but Muenzer and coach Steen Madsen were already working toward Athens.

That fierce spirit has made her one of the sport's most respected athletes. When Muenzer had equipment problems in the run up to the finals here, other teams handed over parts without even being asked. She ended up speeding to victory on a French front tire and an Australian back wheel.

Far from the polished hardwood of the velodrome, the mountain bike course defeated both Canadian men. Seamus McGrath of Carlisle, Ont., finished ninth, and Victoria's Ryder Hesjedal was forced out on the first lap with a flat tire. But Canadians here were still pumped by the performance of the women's team. Marie-Hélène Prémont from Château-Richer, Que., ground out a silver medal on the stony slopes of Mount Parnitha. It was a podium finish she'd allowed herself to dream of after improving on the World Cup circuit, and one she knew was in reach after a strong first lap in the gruelling two-hour event. The 26-year-old tried to catch favourite Gunn-Rita Dahle of Norway, but she couldn't close the 59 second gap. "I wanted to do my best and that's what I did," she said. "The medal is like a bonus."

It looked as if two Canadians might reach the podium, but Alison Sydor of Victoria, in her fourth Olympics, just missed and finished fourth. "After a couple of laps I started to feel the stress of the heat," said Sydor, 37. "I swear I almost passed out before the last descent, so I know I gave my all." M



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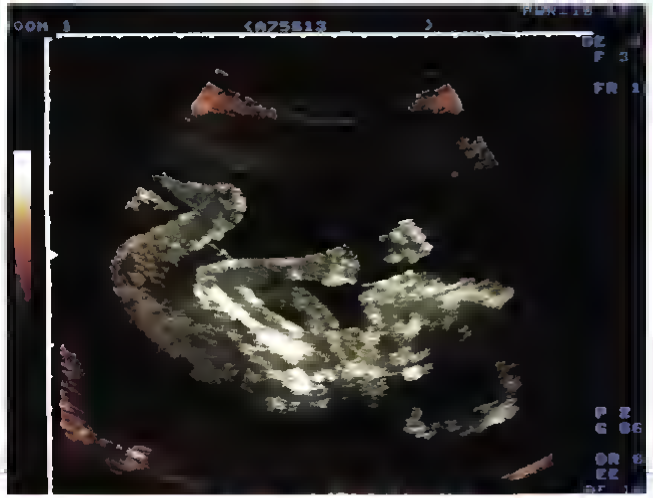
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HEALTHNOTES



Pregnancy | Should doctors be testing for problem drinking?

FASD is the most common cause of mental disability at birth in Canada

A baby's first poop isn't something most people want to look at too closely. But if you are trying to determine if a child is at risk because a mother drank too much during pregnancy, then the green sticky substance, called meconium, is a precious source of information. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is the most common cause of mental disability at birth in Canada, but diagnosing it poses a multitude of challenges. That's why discovering that fetuses exposed to alcohol store the telltale chemicals, ethyl esters, in their first bowel movement was a huge step forward for researchers at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children.

Developed two years ago, the meconium testing process is now being used by an increasing number of children's aid societies and hospitals across Canada and worldwide. But it is not universally accepted or without controversy. "The Canadian public is very split on the issue of women's rights versus babies' rights," says Dr. Gideon Koren, director of the Motherisk program at Sick Kids. "There are physicians who believe it's their duty to know that a child was exposed. But then there are others who think no testing should be done without maternal consent."

Not every child exposed to alcohol in the womb will end up with FASD—a condition that affects an estimated 280,000 Canadians and runs the spectrum from mild fetal alcohol effect to full-blown fetal alcohol syndrome, which is rife with attendant social problems and learning disabilities. But early detection is key. It allows a child to receive timely treatment such as speech therapy, or controlled play to develop communication skills, when the infant brain is still malleable. It can also encourage a problem-drinking mom to seek treatment.

> "The Canadian public is split on the issue of women's rights versus the rights of babies"

This month, Canadian FASD experts are to meet in Saskatoon to debate whether the test should become standard for all newborns. As it is, only some birthing hospitals use the test, and then only where there is suspicion that the baby has been exposed to too much alcohol. "The cynical," says Koren, "will ask, 'why do you care, it's too late?' " But his response to them is, it's never too late to start caring.

KARIN MAILEY

FINDINGS



P

In a blow to soy lovers, Dutch researchers found the legume was not much of an estrogen substitute for post-menopausal women, as proponents claim. According to the year-long study, daily doses of soy powder did not increase bone density or improve memory or cholesterol levels.

MS

Minocycline, a drug commonly used to treat acne, can relieve symptoms and, importantly, lesions in the brains of people suffering from multiple sclerosis, says Dr. Luanne Metz of the University of Calgary. What's more, Metz found the drug seems actually to reduce tissue damage in the brain.

STREP THROAT

Researchers in Maryland say they have solved a 35-year puzzle and developed a vaccine for streptococcal infection, a common childhood illness. Tested on 28 adults, the vaccine triggered a bacteria-fighting response without affecting tissue. In combatting diseases like strep-induced scarlet fever, the body's natural antibodies can attack tissue and damage the heart.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HUGH RUBEN/GETTY IMAGES; LEW ROBERTSON/CORBIS/MAGMA; LWA DANN TARDIF/CORBIS/MAGMA



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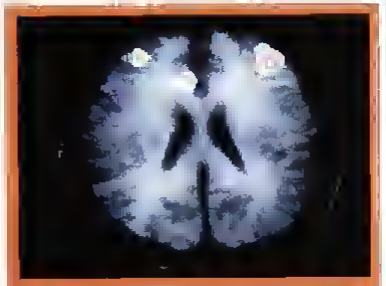


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Memory | Beating back mush brain

Brain dead at 40? Can't remember where you put the car keys, or why exactly you're writing this sentence? Well, there's a reason for that, and there may even be help on the way. First the reason.

By boring into 30 brains donated to science, Harvard Medical School researcher Bruce Yankner found certain key proteins, the beneficial effect of genes known to play a role in memory and learning, can fall off dramatically between 40 and 70 years of age. His conclusion: the human brain approaches old age differently, depending on genetic makeup, and some brains are actually old—like a 70-year-old's—in their 40s.

A PET scan of the brain (above) while processing memory in three areas

His good news: genes that repair damage in the brain seem to increase their activity significantly during middle age. But this too varies by individual. The better news from a Canadian point of view is that being bilingual can keep you mentally sharp as you age. "It's like going to brain gym," says York University research psychologist Ellen Bialystok. She's now trying to determine whether learning a second language later in life will also tone the mental muscles, and she's optimistic it will. That's because the brain's way of coordinating two or more languages engages different high-end parts at the same time. And it is precisely these parts, she says, "that tend to slip away with normal healthy aging."

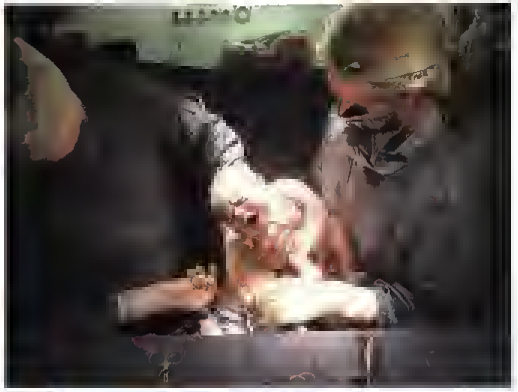
If second languages are not your thing, then UCLA psychiatrist Gary Small offers a two-week boot camp for the brain. Small, who sells books over the Internet, has four components to his brain improvement plan: a healthy diet rich in omega-3 fish fats, fruits and vegetables; yoga-like breathing and relaxation exercises; physical conditioning; and 15 minutes of memory aerobics a day. True to his California roots, Small's website is full of helpful dietary tips. For the complete mental aerobics, though, you have to remember to buy his books.

Umbilical cord | Genetic insurance

You're expecting a baby, and everything is in place if something should go wrong: health insurance, home insurance, life insurance. How about biological insurance? Vancouver's Lifebank Cryogenics now offers new parents exactly this, giving them the chance to freeze their baby's umbilical cord—containing the all-important stem cells in the umbilical blood—in case that child needs fresh immune-system cells to fight off leukemia or some genetic disorder.

Blood stem cells from the umbilical cord provide an alternative to painful bone marrow transplants. But scientists are on the brink of a host of new applications—such as using stem cells to repair heart tissue or to create insulin in diabetics—which add to the value of the frozen cells, since they are viable for at least 15 years. Lifebank is one of six stem cell banks in Canada, is accredited by the American Association of Blood Banks, and has just under 3,000 cords in its vaults. The cells are collected right after birth, with no risk to mother or child, and sent to a storage facility, where they are frozen at a controlled rate until they reach -150° C.

Alberta is the only province so far to set up a free public cord blood bank where donated umbilical cells from across Canada are on deposit and made available as needed. The difference with private banks is that the cells are stored exclusively for your child or family, ensuring an exact or, in the case of siblings, close genetic match. However, the security comes at a price: $1,000 for the first year at Lifebank, and then $125 annually for storage. An extra insurance cost for those first, already expensive childhood years, but one that could well be worth the premium. K.M.



JUVENILE DIABETES A year's supply: 1,460 needles, 1,800 test strips and 144 vials of insulin. Average cost: $3,695.

Surgery | Clot popping

California based Concentric Medical has developed a tiny corkscrew to remove blood clots in the brain, the primary cause of strokes. Tested on 141 patients in experimental settings, the device has now been approved for use in the U.S. and gives doctors another option for helping those in the midst of a stroke. And unlike clot-busting drugs, which must be used within about three hours of a stroke, the Merci Retriever, as it is called, has an eight-hour window.

MONTREAL NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY (BUNS) VO TRUNG/CORBIS/SYGMA/MAGMA

RAGE AGAINST THE DARK

A new documentary spurs the debate over how we treat the elderly

THE EXERCISE-BALL-LOVING, Viagra-popping, nipped-and-tucked Me Generation is in for a jolt. The leading edge of this demographic wave, born between 1946 and 1965, is now 58 years old. Despite a Richard Simmons-like zeal for physical perfection, baby boomers are going to—horror of horrors—die. But what may be worse for them is that, before they do, crumbling bodies or failing minds will betray a significant number, landing them in institutionalized long-term care. Many have already had to park a parent in a nursing home—meaning they've witnessed first-hand the warehousing of the infirm that possibly awaits them as well. But will today's seniors-in-waiting use their considerable clout and train their failing eyesight on the future? Is the boomer bulge willing to stare death, its arch-nemesis, in the eye and ask, "Is warehousing the old the way we want to go?"

Despite its considerable impact on consumerism, politics, pop culture—just about everything, really—the boom doesn't seem to handle death all that well. Not yet, anyway. Patricia Raymaker, who stepped down as the chairperson of Health Canada's National Advisory Council on Aging (NACA) in August, wonders whether baby boomers will rally to the cause of seeing to their own humane demise. "They are so powerful," says Raymaker, "yet they seem to accept the status quo, when there's so much that could be done better." Raymaker's hope is that people soon realize old age is closer than they are willing to think, and that they lean on federal and provincial politicians for failing their greying constituencies. We need, says Raymaker, compassionate, accessible, universal and publicly supported alternatives to stockpiling the aged in institutions that are profoundly demoralizing. "Unless we're prepared to demand that decision makers change *now*," says Raymaker, "we're not going to have much better."

Suggestions include better home care, group homes, supportive housing with ready access to services, and separating patients with dementia from those who still have their mental faculties. Whatever mix is decided on, it will have to be done soon. Seniors constitute the fastest-growing population in Canada. There were an estimated 3.9 million Canadians aged 65 or older in 2001, 67 per cent more than in 1981. As the boomers windsurf toward retirement, however, the seniors contingent is expected to swell to 6.7 million in 2021 and 9.2 million in 2041—accounting for nearly one in four Canadians. Fortunately, most of the elderly are capable of living on their own, says Health Canada, estimating that only about seven per cent of the 65-plus club now live in long-term-care facilities. Still, that could translate into 469,000 institutionalized seniors by 2021, and 644,000 by 2041.

> **'Unless** we're prepared to demand that decision-makers change *now*, we're not going to have much better'

Few observers seem to question the very nature of the old-folks' homes themselves, although that seems to be changing with John Kastner. The Emmy Award-winning filmmaker has come along with *Rage Against the Darkness*, which examines the institutionalization of seniors. With his documentary, Kastner hopes to get the ball rolling on a national debate on the treatment of the elderly. While his film shows facilities staffed by caring individuals, the institutions are fundamentally soul-crushing. "The people are wonderful, *but*, in some respects, these places are nonetheless hellholes," says Kastner. "You've got to ask yourself if there isn't some better way of doing this."

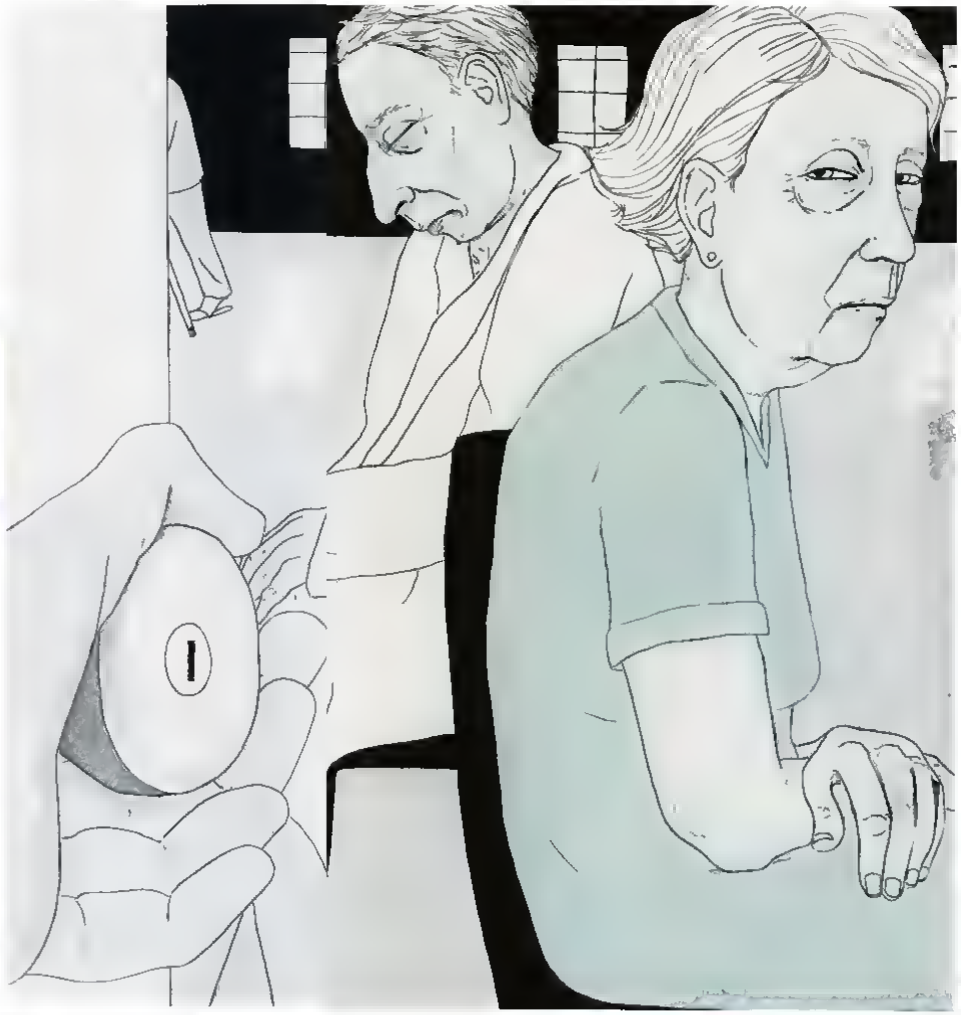


ILLUSTRATION BY LARA TOMLIN

Kastner acknowledges the good work done in the homes. Long-term care institutions, for example, provide regular meals, full-time medical attention, companionship, and relief for overwhelmed families incapable of providing 24-hour care. But new residents often leave behind family homes and a lifetime of possessions, taking little more than a single suitcase to share a claustrophobic, hospital-like single room with a complete stranger. Nursing homes frequently combine mentally alert residents with demented patients prone to irrational and sometimes violent behaviour. And there is the unavoidable sense one is being put out to pasture. "It's worse than going to prison," is how Kastner recalls one resident describing the experience to him. "At least in prison you know you're going to be free one day."

No one seriously suggests doing away with these homes. Rather, the focus is on keeping seniors out of them for as long as possible. In part, that can be accomplished by promoting healthy living—eating right, exercising, and avoiding injury. But the real answer—the big-ticket item so many advocates for the elderly are pushing for—is adequate home care. Because home care isn't covered by the Canada Health Act, Ottawa has no jurisdiction and is forced to make conditional offers of money to the provinces. Also, the $2-billion National Home Care Program proposed by the Liberals is somewhat misleading in name. The funds largely target the home-care needs of patients discharged early from the hospital—not the chronically ill elderly who desperately need help. Judy Cutler, director of communications for CARP, Canada's association for the 50-plus, says that needs to change. "It's been clearly shown, in study after study," says Cutler, "that where it is appropriate, home care is cheaper than institutional care, whether it's a hospital or a nursing home."

At the moment, home care is a patchwork

of services that varies from province to province, funded by a mix of public and private money. NACA's interim report on seniors in Canada last year noted the hazards. "Selection of a retirement home," the report says, "can be chancy, as a lack of a consistent process to ensure quality standards in services—either through regulation or accreditation—means there are some great homes and some awful ones."

The Liberals have pledged to introduce a National Home Care Program, paid for by a new Home Care Fund that will total $2 billion over five years. But there's a catch. The Liberals would dole out the money only to provinces and territories that pass legislation to govern "the provision of at least an agreed-upon, minimum basket of home care services." But the provinces, as Canadians are well aware, don't appreciate health care dollars with strings attached. While pleased with the $2-billion pledge, says Cutler, the association and its 400,000 members remain "very concerned" that home care doesn't seem to be on the provinces' radar.

NURSING homes are 'worse than going to prison. At least in prison you know you're going to be free one day.'

Progress is being made. The Health Council now reports on the quality of health care improvements, while the Institute of Aging, part of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, is there to study our emerging needs. And beginning on Sept. 13, the premiers and territorial leaders meet with Prime Minister Paul Martin. The critical gathering, however, is shaping up to be another federal-provincial tug-of-war, this time over a proposed multi-billion dollar national pharmacare program. "Politicians give us a little bit of lip service here and there, in Speeches from the Throne," says Raymaker, "but I don't believe they have paid attention to the impact of our aging population."

That's where the boomers come in. Health care has been *the* burning political issue in Canada for a decade because middle-aged, middle-class people made it so. And they're probably going to have to focus their attention on life's next stage before the old get the decent send-off we all deserve. M

A TRAGICOMEDY WITH FEW LAUGHS

INANE TELEVISION dramas and outlandish pretenders to the reality-TV throne, step aside. True drama and reality are the purview of *Rage Against the Darkness*, a disturbing three-part documentary on the indignity of being elderly, infirm and forced to live in an old-age home. The CBC bills the series by Toronto based, Emmy Award-winning director John Kastner as a "tragicomic" trilogy, but there is precious little here that's funny. Viewers—aging baby boomers, in particular—might well be forgiven for feeling like Roger Daltrey, the Who's frontman, who famously sang, "Hope I die before I get old."

Five troubling hours on what's in store for some of us may be a bit much for sensitive viewers. But give it a chance, and you'll be rewarded with a touching portrait of guilt-ridden families struggling with sending an unhappy senior off to die in someone else's care. Set to air on the CBC on Sept. 15, 16 and 19, and on CBC Newsworld beginning on Sept. 17, *Rage Against the Darkness* smartly raises tough questions while thankfully avoiding any high-moral-ground preaching. The series, filmed over three years, is not a condemnation of the individual seniors' homes that granted Kastner broad access. The facilities are staffed by caring health-care workers. It's simply the nature of these places—effectively, prisons for the aged—that Kastner implicitly criticizes.



Bunny (top, left) is comforted by Leona; Gert enjoys a day at the races

In Toronto last year, "Bunny and Leona," the first instalment, won for best Canadian feature at Hot Docs, North America's largest festival of documentaries. Bunny, 67, and Leona, 72, are sisters who lived together for almost 30 years, but Bunny's stroke, and Leona's difficulty walking, force the two to live apart. Bunny's initially positive attitude contrasts sharply with Leona's. The elder sibling loathes the retirement home she is relegated to after a well-meaning but basically ill-conceived stint living with Bunny's son. Leona eventually thrives in her new-found social milieu, but Bunny, unable to walk and barely capable of feeding herself, spirals downward into black despair. Kastner's fine use of old photographs—there's one of the two sisters as young girls in tidy gingham dresses—conveys how cruel time can be. We see Bunny confined in her wheelchair, three days after being admitted, demoralized by the many incoherent, mumbling residents. "I can't live here," she laments. "I can't face this day after day after day."

"Gert's Secret," the second in the series, features its most engaging character. At 102, Gert is a sparkplug. She's lived in a home for 16 years, and still gets out to bet on the horses. But we never really learn her secret for living happily in a home, other than a brief flick at the obvious—Gert's relative good health is part of it. That's a shame. The charming old girl must have something to say about how she remains so cheerful in such a grim place.

The final instalment is the best. "Living Dangerously" follows Uncle Phil, 88, who suffers from osteoporosis but won't leave his home, in spite of having collapsed into several diabetic comas. Meantime, Helen, an 82-year-old widow with failing eyesight, can barely get around the house. Their families try to cajole both into abandoning their homes, insisting what wonderful places long-term-care facilities can be. Helen's son Ken sees mom isn't buying it. "She knows where she's going," says Ken. "It's not Disneyland." Ultimately, *Rage Against the Darkness* leaves viewers to wonder why we haven't found a better way. D.H.

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A HEAD START ON AUTUMN

The publishers' tactic pays off, writes BRIAN BETHUNE

FALL REMAINS the main book season in Canada, but every year publishers push at the front end, hoping that an August release will gain reader attention for a few works they fear would be lost in the later crowd. The gambit seems particularly worthwhile this year, with fall set to be dominated by blockbuster non-fiction ranging from *Greenpeace*, Rex Weyler's history of Canada's iconic environmental organization, to a host of prominent memoirs, including Peter C. Newman's *Here Be Dragons*. And the books themselves are among the season's best.

There is an elegiac quality to Beth Powning's writing, derived from her immersion in the rhythms of the natural world. It shows in all her non-fiction works, from the text that accompanies her photographic celebration of her New Brunswick farm to *Shadow Child: An Apprenticeship in Love and Loss*, Powning's haunting 1999 account of her stillborn son. Few Canadian writers so stress the ties that bind a life lived to the place where it's lived, Powning's central artistic concern, both as photographer and writer, has always been to locate herself—and her characters—along the great chain of being.

That emphasis serves Powning well in **The Hatbox Letters**, her debut novel at age 55. Two parallel stories run through it, "one completely made up," says the author, "and one not." Even the fictional tale is grounded in the details of Powning's life, revolving as it does around a rural New Brunswick woman in her 50s. But while the writer's husband, ceramics artist Peter Powning, is very much alive, Kate Harding is a shattered widow whose painter husband dropped dead of a heart attack before her eyes.

More than a year after Tom's death, Kate remains adrift. She obsesses over books like Isak Dinesen's *Out of Africa*, "evocations of places that are so deeply experienced that every part—trees, wind, mountains, sky—becomes vivid, distinct, imbued with a sense of eternity." At the same time, Kate resents that her own familiar landscape has carried on as always through four full seasons, indifferent to the comings and goings of transient humans. The thread that connected *her* life to *her* place has snapped, and Kate cannot see how it will ever be rejoined.

Not, that is, until her sister brings her nine antique hatboxes filled with letters and journals rescued from their family's 18th-century Connecticut home. Or rather, Powning's New England home, inhabited by her ancestors since 1797, for the tale of domestic tragedies and joys told by those records is *The Hatbox Letters*' factual story. The old house has always symbolized to Kate her grandmother's unconditional love and acceptance. When she learns that Hetty was not supposed to marry her grandfather Giles—he was originally engaged to Hetty's vivacious sister, Jonnie—Kate starts to come out of her sorrow. Reassessing her adored grandparents in the light of this startling revelation, she comes to realize that love is as much willed as experienced, and begins to see the possibility of a new life for herself.

Nothing much happens in *The Hatbox Letters*, a quiet story full of quiet ironies. One is unintentional, the contrast between the obvious pains Powning has taken to get right what really matters to her, the details of private history (food, entertainment, family life) a century ago, and her errors in public history (starting the First World War two months early). But there is also the way Kate cheers on the unfolding courtship of Giles and Jonnie, even knowing that their marriage would have erased her from existence. And she is also acutely aware that, given the social mores and essential decency of everyone involved, there could have been only one reason why the couple didn't wed. When Kate reads Giles' first worried mention of Jonnie's illness, she shuts his diary, knowing what's to come.

As a novel, *The Hatbox Letters* has flaws beyond sloppy chronology. The introduction of a secondary character—meant, the author says, "to avoid the trap of writing about a woman sitting in a house, pondering her fate"—jars the reader more than it does Kate's fragile sensibilities. But as a study in grief, a subject Powning knows all too well, the novel offers a remarkable portrait of a woman who fears that losing her grief will also strip her of her last, tenuous connection to the past.

In contrast to Powning's book, quite a lot happens in Greg Hollingshead's **Bedlam**. Set in the years following the French Revolution, primarily in the notorious London madhouse of St. Mary of Bethlehem—from which we ultimately derive the word bedlam, meaning a place or state of utter confusion—the novel unfolds from the perspectives of three real-life characters. The central figure is tea merchant James Tilley Matthews, one of the most famous paranoid schizophrenics in history, thanks to hospital administrator John Haslam, who in 1810 published *Illustrations of Madness: Exhibiting a Singular Case of Insanity* about Matthews, the first full study of a psychiatric patient. (Haslam and Matthews's wife Margaret are the other sides of the novel's triangle.)

ARTISTS empathize with the mad, in part because they like to think of themselves as mad, albeit in a safe way

Even allowing for Hollingshead's artistic bias—artists almost always empathize with the mad, in part because they like to think of themselves as mad, albeit in a safe, touched-by-the-hand-of-God way—Matthews emerges as a sympathetic and fascinating figure. Paranoid schizophrenics often believe that outside forces are responsible for their delusions, but who their tormentors are and how they exert their influence is culturally specific. In the 20th century, radio waves were the commonly cited means, while popular agents included the CIA, aliens and the Vatican. Matthews, intelligent and sensitive as he was, had no such means of invisible communications at hand to fire his imagination.

To explain what he called his "torture at a distance," Matthews seized upon his era's new, mysterious and vaguely menacing technology: the mechanized textile looms of the early Industrial Revolution. He believed that he was controlled by an "air loom," powered by mesmerism and animal magnetism. (In contemporary Paris, Austrian physician Franz Mesmer was preaching the medical benefits of hypnotism and iron magnets.) The air loom was operated by Jacobin revolutionaries and other enemies of peace between England and France.

Hollingshead, a Governor General's award winner (*The Roaring Girl*, 1995) and Giller nominee (*The Healer*, 1998), handles his

THE SEASON'S EARLY CROP



THE HATBOX LETTERS
By Beth Powning
Knopf
$32



BEDLAM
By Greg Hollingshead
Harper Collins
$34.95



THE NINE PLANETS
By Edward Riche
Penguin
$34



In his satirical series of paintings *The Rake's Progress*, William Hogarth depicted Bedlam in 1735

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A real-life inmate of Bedlam features in Hollingshead's latest novel

first rate raw material with verve and sensitivity, and renders it in a highly readable mock 18th-century prose *Bedlam* brings to mind that even paranoids have real enemies, as Henry Kissinger famously said about Richard Nixon, and Matthews, a republican sympathizer who goes to Paris on a self-appointed peace mission, makes several in high places There are more dangerous, if less naive, madmen freely roaming the streets of London while he languishes in the asylum Some of them even work for Bedlam, including the ambitious and cynical Haslam, who believes that "theories about madness are another form of it." Haslam, in fact, is more tormented than the gentle Matthews, but not beyond redemption During the course of their long relationship, the physician receives more healing from his patient than he gives in this beguiling and thought-provoking novel

It is true that comedic writers, as CBC radio host Bill Richardson once remarked, are "always seated below the salt" by critics (Richardson, whose *Bachelor Brothers' Bed & Breakfast* won the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour in 1994, knows what he's talking about.) But Newfoundlander Edward Riche, a very good—and very funny—writer, is starting to attract the accolades generally accorded more serious authors His fine first novel, *Rare Birds* (1997), which became an equally excellent film starring William Hurt (Riche wrote the screenplay), poked relatively gentle fun at all kinds of deserving targets, including birders, a group the rest of us tend to consider harmless, even lovable, crazies But Riche's new novel, The Nine Planets, is in a whole other cosmos, a satire more *A Modest Proposal* than *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*

His main protagonist, Marty Devereaux, hates everybody and everything He's saved from being completely insufferable only by his courage in saying nasty thoughts out loud and the wit with which he expresses them Marty, the co-founder of a successful St John's private school, understands the business of education very well He knows his school thrives on its posh reputation, rather than its achievements And Marty wants to cash in by launching a chain of brand name private schools His reach is well beyond his grasp, though, and the result is humiliation, heavy drinking and ever more viciously amusing comments about the universe around him

At the same time, Marty's egocentric orbit intersects with several others' including a disastrous new lover, her husband, real-estate sharks—and his 16-year-old niece Cathy, easily his match for acidic commentary and negative energy Her parents, who think that educator Marty must be a teen expert, want him to help them connect with their difficult daughter They don't seem aware that Cathy considers Marty "an unbelievable tool" or that her uncle especially despises young people But surprising things happen—not the least, for this novel, is a glimmer of hope—when Marty and Cathy collide There is something not just darkly comic, but laugh-out-loud funny on most pages of *The Nine Planets*, and it's often found within moments of sharp insight That's a rare and beautiful combination, one that puts Riche near the head of the writers' table M

HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



GOODBYE TO LONG HELLOS

We hope we made a difference in Ethiopia—it sure had an impact on us

AFTER TWO YEARS of living and working in Ethiopia, my wife Lori and I recently returned home to Canada. Before we left Awassa, a pretty lakeside town in the Great Rift Valley of southern Ethiopia, other expatriates warned us that going back would not be easy, that we'd suffer "reverse culture shock." Sure enough, Canadian supermarkets seem very large and filled with a paralyzing choice of crackers, frozen pizzas and fabric softeners Beyond such day-to-day adjustments, however, our biggest challenge lies in fitting our Ethiopian experience into our newly rediscovered Canadian life

Lori and I had signed up with Voluntary Service Overseas, a non-governmental organization that sends volunteers to developing countries worldwide As professionals in our 30s living in Vancouver, we made a move that required a huge leap of faith But the promise of adventure and the notion of giving something back were too hard to resist. My wife was placed as an instructor at the local teachers' college in Awassa, while my placement was at the road authority, working as a bridge engineer, developing systems and training my colleagues to use new design practices

My initial thoughts when we learned of our destination were of famine and drought While my view of Ethiopia still includes those disturbing images, they're only part of the picture. Ethiopia has an intriguing cultural diversity, the result of a long and rich history There are scores of languages, many using an ancient script unique to the area. The traditional Ethiopian dance, the *iskista*, appears to be a continuous series of shoulder dislocations and is seemingly impossible (and perhaps dangerous) for a foreigner to attempt

I was fortunate to see the country as a resident rather than as a tourist. Each day, I rode my bicycle to work, weaving between the goats and horse-drawn carts After reaching the office, I'd spend the next 20 minutes shaking hands and hugging my colleagues—greetings are very important in Ethiopian culture My colleagues, bright and eager to learn in the face of considerable change, were always willing to spend an unpaid evening or weekend in a training workshop.

For entertainment, there were great restaurants, the cinema and boat trips on Lake Awassa. I also explored the nearby hills on my bike, though I never managed to entice any of my Ethiopian friends to join me. "You ride your bicycle up the mountain just for fun?" they'd say. "And then you just ride back down again? But why?" For most Ethiopians, soccer is the game of choice In any pub with a satellite dish, you can usually find a European match But it is Ethiopia's long-distance runners that carry the banner of national pride I can only imagine the nationwide delight these past few weeks as their athletes reached the Olympic podium in Athens, beating out their Kenyan rivals (Ethiopians and Canadians are similar in this respect: we both take great joy in defeating our southern neighbours at our respective national sports.)



Of course, there were challenges as well As one of only a handful of foreigners in Awassa, I couldn't be anonymous On a Monday morning, there was always someone who could tell me what beer I'd been drinking on Saturday night. This celebrity status also meant many children shouted at me as I walked down the street—usually nice things, but not always It probably didn't help that to a local Amharic speaker, my name sounds like "keet"—a word that happens to mean "ass."

I was also continually ignorant of local events, which was awkward With my tenuous grasp of Amharic, newspapers and radio were incomprehensible One guy regularly drove down our street blaring announcements through a loudspeaker. If the lights went off a few hours later, I'd then realize he'd been serving the neighbourhood notice of a scheduled power shutdown In my office, where most news—business and personal—is passed around through casual conversation, I was even less tuned in. Abandoning all subtlety, I'd ask, "Did anyone quit their job last week? Did anyone get engaged?"

Now that we're back home, I find myself reflecting on the value of my placement At the risk of sounding clichéd, the biggest change undoubtedly is with me My views of Canada, the world and how they interact have been profoundly altered. But in Ethiopia's giant development struggle, did I have an impact? After living in a land flooded with foreign aid dollars but still struggling to feed itself, it is easy to be cynical. But I believe that, for a handful of my colleagues, I made a small difference. And I believe it's these kinds of changes that will have a lasting effect

In my more irreverent moments, I think of the experience this way for two years, I was the caboose on the train of Ethiopia. I was mostly irrelevant, but will be missed by some for a short time I was always the last to know anything important. I was a different colour and lots of children waved at me M

Keith Holmes is back in Vancouver, where he's rarely called "Ass." To comment overtoyou@macleans.ca

ILLUSTRATION BY SANDRA DIONISI



CONFESSIONS FROM THE SHOOTING GALLERY

A critic steps behind the camera, and gets hooked on a cottage industry

LIKE MOST ADDICTIONS, it began as a lark. Last summer, on the dock of a cottage we rent in an obscure nook of the Laurentians, I discovered the video function on my point-and-shoot digital camera—a dinky 2.0 megapixel toy. Until then, I'd never shot anything other than stills. But by switching the camera's dial to a tiny icon of a film strip … voila, I was making motion pictures. Very small ones. No clip could run longer than 19 seconds, and the camera's memory card held about a dozen clips. With a camcorder, you can let the tape roll on and on. But this was like burning film. Every second was precious, every shot had a deadline tension. And when the memory card filled up, the shoot was over.

I had a widescreen iMac in the corner of the old log cabin where we slept. Ferrying the footage straight from the dock, I'd dump it onto the computer, edit with iMovie and slap on a soundtrack with iTunes. A lot of the footage was accidental. In among the shots of kids and a dog on a windsurfer were abstract smears of lake, dock and feet—captured when I didn't realize the camera was still running. They looked as compelling as anything else. By the end of the day I had a roughly edited two-minute "film" with titles, dissolves and music by Daniel Lanois.

But here's what astonished me: just moments after the footage had been shot, it looked really, really old, like a home movie from the '50s. This primitive MPEG video had a flickering, fragile quality, reminiscent of old super 8. There was something haunting about it, as if the camera had left behind those lives on the dock, but caught a ghostly animus invisible to the naked eye, a shimmery thread of light and shadow. The images conveyed an instant nostalgia—for a vanishing summer, a present digitally decayed into a half-remembered past.

After a week or so I'd developed a literal cottage industry—sugaring off the sap of summer days into a kind of ultra-light personal cinema, using the iDon't-know-what I'm-doing program. I gave myself a kindergarten course in cutting. Apple's iMovie program may be the Fisher-Price toy of digital editing, but it's more sophisticated than anything professional filmmakers were working with a decade ago. It's also dead simple, and so intuitively designed that you can teach yourself how to use it with few detours to the Help menu. Digital editing is not unlike word processing, with cut-and-paste tools and the ability to sculpt narrative structure with the click of a mouse. Having spent countless hours watching movies for a living, I also felt I had some sense of how one image should cut to another.

Of course, I was flirting with a cliché—*I love my job, but what I really want to do is direct.* Yet, unlike Jean-Luc Godard (who started out as a film critic), I have no ambitions to become a professional filmmaker. I'm just thrilled to have a hobby. Unlike writing, it comes with no baggage. It's pure play. But if I was foolish enough to get serious about this, the technology is now ridiculously accessible. With a mini-DV camera and a robust personal computer, anyone can stumble into filmmaking. Consumer camcorders can be had for $1,000. And for roughly $5,000 you can choose from a variety of professional cameras on a par with what Lars von Trier used to shoot *Dancer in the Dark*. For another $1,300, an amateur can buy Apple's Final Cut Pro, an editing program that puts you in an extremely sophisticated cockpit—it's the same software now used by Walter Murch, the Oscar-winning editor of *The English Patient* and *Cold Mountain*.

WITH just a mini-DV camera and a personal computer, you too can stumble into a serious filmmaking habit

As a Sunday painter I've fallen into a trend that's changing the movies. Traditionally, cinema has been our most mechanized art form. Taking over city streets like an occupying army, a Hollywood production uses a mountain of metal to capture just a few minutes of 35-mm footage. But inexpensive digital video has led to an explosion of personal filmmaking. Mini-DV has revolutionized the documentary. The Sundance Film Festival now has a program devoted to work made for the Web. And one of the breakout hits at Sundance this year was *Tarnation*, a family memoir that novice American director Jonathan Caouette says he edited entirely on iMovie for just US$218.32.

By comparison, my latest cottage trilogy is a blockbuster, at least in budgetary terms. Last year, the point-and-shoot camera and iMovie turned out to be my harmless gateway drugs. By the fall, I'd become a serial borrower of camcorders, offering to review them for the *Maclean's* website. Last spring I acquired Final Cut Express, the consumer version of Apple's pro editing program. Since then, at $70 a day, I've rented out the Sony PD DSR-150, which has been the industry standard digital camera used by documentary filmmakers.

What do I shoot? Whatever catches my eye: landscapes, bridges, culverts, fences, birds, insects, water, traffic … stock footage. I've spent hours fiddling with a tripod on a bridge trying to shoot a full moon rising over the Don Valley Parkway. I once got permission to set up a camera at the edge of the YMCA pool at closing time—then shot the bright, corrugated lane markers as they were being rolled up. I had no purpose in mind, but they looked mysterious. I like to collect strange images and set them to ominous music. I seem to use a lot of Philip Glass.

I've also embarked on a more ambitious project called *Manual Labour*, collating close-up shots of hands at work—massage therapists, bread bakers, pastry makers, cigar rollers, sushi chefs—and choreographing the images to music. It began as an exercise. But after a few months I feel as if I'd flung myself headlong into writing a novel and got stuck a third the way through. Digital editing is a pit of infinite possibilities. Living up to its title, *Manual Labour* could take years to complete, or abandon.

The quick, casual projects are more satisfying—whittling a two-minute saga from an afternoon of shooting hummingbirds at a red feeder in a steady rain, using a click of the mouse to slow the blur of their wing beats down to a flicker, adding an aria by Maria Callas, then sliding sound and picture back and forth, until something crystallizes out of random convergence. If that sounds pretentious, so be it. At this point, like a 13-year-old putting his hand to poetry for the first time, I'm happy to invent the wheel.

Has it changed the way I watch movies? Not really, but my respect for filmmakers has increased—at least for those who manage to forge personal art from what's still a largely industrial medium. And as someone who could never paint or draw, with this digital fingerpainting I can apply a vocabulary gleaned from years of professional watching. Finally, I can move the frame.

I've yet to buy my own camera, partly because I fear that will be the beginning of the end, a marriage that could drain the magic from a perfect romance. This summer, when I returned to the cottage, I'd persuaded a PR woman at Panasonic to lend me a demo model of the DVX100A, a professional mini DV camera that's now all the rage. Most video cameras shoot at 30 frames per second, but this one has the option of shooting at 24 frames per second, like a movie camera. The images are warmer and softer—more filmic—without the crisp shine of conventional video. Sticker price: about $5,000. The actual camera loaned to me had been to Mt. Everest, on an expedition with the Discovery Channel. Now it was at the cottage.

My wife was concerned. She thought the neighbours might think we were running a wilderness porn site. She didn't like turning an evening paddle into a "shoot." And as I leafed through the thick manual, and worried about "white balance" settings, she was nostalgic for the previous summer, when I was playing with a gadget the size of a bar of soap. Although the DVX100A (weird name—if Ikea made cameras, they'd be called Jorg or Ingmar) is very compact for a pro camera, it's more imposing than a camcorder. When you stick it in someone's face, suddenly they feel they're on the news. Also, it weighs about two kilos, which doesn't sound like much. But after a couple of weeks I developed a hamstring injury, and wondered if it came from swimming, or from the intensity of trying to hold a steady frame with stupid posture—I don't try this at home.

In just one year, I've upped my habit from a point-and-shoot toy to a hunk of serious hardware. If only I could upgrade my talent as easily. But now there's no going back. I've found another way to watch movies. M



ILLUSTRATION BY ALAIN PILON

BACKTALK

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The only A-list action star who'd rather be watching Dr. Phil

Moss gets her biggest kicks hanging out in front of the tube with her son

When the *Matrix* trilogy ended, a very tired, sore and pregnant **Carrie-Anne Moss** swore off action flicks. But that was long before **Tom Cruise**'s people started calling. "I didn't want to put my body through all that again, but how could I say no to working with Tom?" says Moss, who was recently cast in *Mission: Impossible 3*. "It's been a great motivator. I just got back to my pre-baby weight."

That said, there are no *Matrix*-like vinyl bodysuits to squeeze into for her current big-screen role as an FBI agent in the psycho thriller *Suspect Zero*, also starring **Ben Kingsley** and **Aaron Eckhart**. "I was terrified of scary movies when I was a kid," says Moss, 37, who was born in Vancouver. "I'd go anyway, but would always cover my eyes and scream. I still do." The new mom and self-proclaimed TV junkie says she much prefers zoning out watching her favourites—*Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Last Comic Standing* and *Dr. Phil*. Not exactly the action-packed lifestyle we'd envisioned for Trinity. JOHN INTINI

'She's got a gun and a flashlight—what more could a woman want? And she got to say scientific cop-speak. She was in her element.' —Eckhart, on his co-star's role

BUZZ LIST

[redacted]

Reality show cameras will follow **Mötley Crüe** drummer to college this fall. His major? Considering his hard-core history, film seems a logical choice.

FATHER OF THE [redacted]



NBC's new comedy stars animated lions in the Siegfried and Roy show. Wonder what happens to Roy?

CARRIE-ANNE MOSS

Fits a thriller in between two major box-office franchises.

[redacted]



U.S. indie label is re-releasing *We Were Born in a Flame* south of the border. Another brother down.

THE MUPPETS [redacted]

Quentin Tarantino joins Kermit the Frog in the cast of the remake. Maybe they should call it Reservoir Frogs.

[redacted]



Starlet adopts an English accent in her regally blond role as a 19th-century gold digger in *Vanity Fair*.

DAVE MATTHEWS [redacted]

Boys get slapped with lawsuit for dumping human waste from bus onto passing boat. Some people just can't take a joke

Celebs | Where 'I do' means 'maybe'





Two weeks after a quickie Las Vegas marriage to a New York money manager, hotel heiress **Nicky Hilton** (above left) has yet to pull a Britney. (Spears had her Vegas nuptials annulled after 55 hours.) Still, the odds of long-term bliss aren't in Hilton's favour, judging by Sin City celebrity weddings past:

Mickey Rooney and Ava Gardner, 1942
The first of eight romps down the aisle for serial-groom Mickey. Turns out they all took place at the Little Church of the West. Wonder if he got a deal?

Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, 1958
Amazingly, 46 years after rolling the dice, these two film stars (above right) are still together. There must be something in all that salad dressing.

Frank Sinatra and Mia Farrow, 1966
Ol' Blue Eyes pretty much lived at the Sands hotel in the '60s, so it's no surprise he decided to get hitched there. Too bad the happily-ever-after only lasted two years.

Corey Feldman and Vanessa Marcil, 1989
A career highlight for this oddball actor who cashed in the last of his *Goonies* fame to land this soap opera-turned-*Las Vegas* star. They divorced two years later.

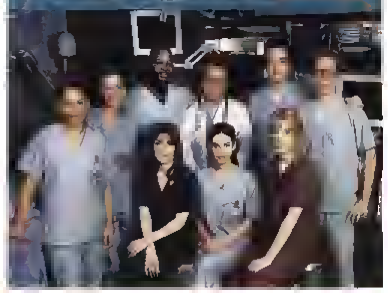
Noel Gallagher and Meg Mathews, 1997
Elvis impersonator performs on the big day for the quiet **Oasis** brother and his bride. Sin City curse catches up to them in 2001.

[redacted] hours on TV, talk-show host Regis Philbin earned a world record for most hours on camera.

Film | Health care that'll make you sick

Take *Police Academy*, add a pinch of *Porky's*, and set it in a hospital. What you have left is *Intern Academy*, a new gross-out film written and directed by *SCTV* alumni **Dave Thomas**—who also guest stars. The film, in theatres on Sept. 10, tells the tale of six medical interns doomed to train at St. Albert's hospital, the worst medical training facility in the country. The interns—played by a talented group of young, unknown Canadian actors who improvised their roles—contend with everything from psychotic instructors to abusive patients and routine sexual humiliation. Food fights with human organs, projectile feces and hot-tub parties with the hospital administrator (**Dan Aykroyd**) round out the action. "Some scenes are kind of gory," says Thomas, "but it's not like those reality medical shows that make you want to throw up." Not quite, but pretty close. LIANNE GEORGE

The medical team at St. Albert's spews every gross-out joke you can shake a [redacted] at.



TV | Move over Superman



Atomic Betty tackles villains on—and off—the playground.

The coolest new animated character to hit the small screen this fall is a red-headed, intergalactic crime-fighting Canadian girl named Betty. *Atomic Betty*, premiering on Teletoon on Sept. 6, is an action-packed, half-hour show featuring the sweet and precocious Betty—voiced by 13-year-old Toronto actor **Tajja Isen**. Betty spends half her time in the fictional town of Moosejaw Heights, Sask., fending off the mean girls at school, and the other half aboard the Hyper Galactic Starcruiser, defending the Earth from her evil archrival, the Supreme Overlord Maximus I.Q., and his loyal minion Minimus P.U. The show has already been picked up in 55 countries—including Iceland, Tahiti and Pakistan. If Betty doesn't make tween girls around the world want to live in Saskatchewan, nothing will. L.G.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES; COURTESY OF NBC; COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MUSIC; COURTESY OF ODEON FILMS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JOSEPH/X17; HULTON ARCH VE/GETTY IMAGES; DAN POWER; COURTESY OF TELETOON

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Life | Anything I do, they do better

Whatever happened to consumer self-reliance? You know, that do-it-yourself mentality that spawned countless home improvement shows and idiot guides? It appears the sense of accomplishment from a job well done can't compete with the feeling of getting someone else to do it for you. Hence, the burgeoning do-it-for-me approach to retail. Increasingly, department stores and big-box retailers will not only sell you the goods but, often for an extra fee, they'll come to your home, set things up and show you how it works. Here are a few retailers cashing in on consumer sloth.

Best Buy The electronics superstore's "Geek Squad" program dispatches super nerds to help technophobes set up their wireless home entertainment systems or eliminate nasty computer viruses.

Home Depot Organizational consultants will unclutter your life by designing and installing personalized storage systems for any room in your home.

Holt Renfrew Fans of this swish department store can enjoy the services of a personal shopper—someone who knows the client's taste and size and can pop by their home at any hour to make an emergency delivery of a party frock, perhaps.

LCBO Ontario residents needn't struggle again when searching for a decent bottle of wine. Consultants at the LCBO will stock your cellar with bottles that suit your taste and price range. Bragging rights at your next dinner party, of course, are all yours.

SARAH EVERTS

FORTY-TWO PER CENT of teenagers say the most stressful thing about going back to school is picking an outfit for the first day.

Tech | Take it easy kid, we're watching

Worried your teen might be hot-rodding it behind the wheel of the family car? Then maybe you should consider the RS-1000 On-Board computer system. Created by Thousand Oaks, Calif.-based Road Safety International Inc., this black box gives parents a permanent licence for back-seat driving. If your teen speeds or takes a corner too sharply, the unit growls a warning and then beeps when it records the infraction. Seat belt reminders are also included, as well as rebukes for unsafe attempts to back up. At home, parents can download entire trip records. And though there is no firm date, the company is planning a unit with a GPS option that will be capable of pinpointing the exact location of slip-ups. The humiliation it produces—on, say, a first date—is just an amusing by-product. S.E.



Warning sounds pipe from the RS-1000 whenever your teen stretches the road rules.

ILLUSTRATION BY LUC LATULIPPE



LIONEL DELUY

Jason Lewis finishes John Intini's sentences

Jason Lewis's good looks made choosing a career path pretty easy. The New Yorker has spent the last decade as a top international model and last year put his near-perfect features to good use as Kim Cattrall's boy toy on *Sex and the City*. Starting this month, he's in Toronto starring in a remount of Kenneth Lonergan's *This Is Our Youth*. Lewis, 33, recently finished *Maclean's* Assistant Editor John Intini's sentences.

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND ... the mullet

THE ONSCREEN KISS I'D LOVE TO SEE WOULD BE ... Saddam Hussein tonguing George W. Bush

MY FAVOURITE DISNEY CHARACTER HAS ALWAYS BEEN ... Flower from *Bambi*

Who can resist the little stinker?

I GET INTIMIDATED BY ... packs of wild dogs in dark alleys at night.

IF I COULD BE A TOP ATHLETE IN ANY SPORT ... I'd like to be a ballplayer with Michael Jordan-like skills.

WHENEVER I THINK I'M LOSING MY GRIP ON REALITY ... I remember I never had a grip on it in the first place.

IF I DIDN'T ACT I'D PROBABLY ... be working in politics. But considering how many great people we have carving up the world, I don't think there's room for me.

KIM CATTRALL'S LIPS ... are just below her nose.

FOR MORE "JOHN INTINI'S SENTENCES" VISIT WWW.MACLEANS.CA/PEOPLE

ESSENTIAL LEWIS

1. Modelling break came in the early '90s, when selected for a Guess ad.

2. Landed a four-episode stint playing a hotshot actor on *Beverly Hills 90210* in 1997.

3. Upcoming films include *My Boliywood Bride* and *The Jacket*.

BLADE RUNNER came out on top in a survey of 60 international scientists asked to name the all-time best science fiction film.

Books | How death came into the world

Convincing, witty and humane—there's even a kind word for cannibals—*The Buried Soul: How Humans Invented Death* (Fitzhenry & Whiteside) is scholarly argument at its best. British archaeologist Timothy Taylor ranges through thousands of years looking for traces of when our ancestors first began to distinguish between the body and the spirit that animates it. Taylor finds his evidence in blindfolded and tortured bodies preserved in peat bogs, accounts of human sacrifice, and a handful of ancient burials. Most intriguing is Taylor's critique of the expert consensus on why there is so little evidence of prehistoric interment. It's not the vagaries of the archaeological record, he writes at the end of his second chapter, but that for most of our time on this planet there was "a more obvious way to deal with death." Readers then turn the page to Chapter 3: "The Edible Dead."



BestSellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	THE DA VINCI CODE, Dan Brown (62)	1
2.	THE RULE OF FOUR, Ian Caldwell and Dustin Thomason (31)	4
3.	THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN, Mitch Albom (34)	7
4.	THE FULL CUPBOARD OF LIFE, Alexander McCall Smith (14)	8
5.	BIRDS WITHOUT WINGS, Louis de Bernières (5)	2
6.	A COMPLICATED KINDNESS, Miriam Toews (12)	5
7	E IS FOR RICOCHET, Sue Grafton (3)	9
8.	THE JANE AUSTEN BOOK CLUB, Karen Joy Fowler (6)	6
9.	THE COLLECTED STORIES, Carol Shields (5)	3
10.	NATASHA AND OTHER STORIES, Dav d Gilmour (1)	

Non-fiction

1.	EATS, SHOOTS AND LEAVES, Lynne Truss (18)	1
2.	THE PAGAN CHRIST, Tom Harpur (22)	3
3.	MY LIFE, Bill Clinton (8)	2
4.	DARK AGE AHEAD, Jane Jacobs (14)	5
5.	DRESS YOUR FAMILY IN CORDUROY AND DENIM, David Sedaris (8)	6
6.	SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL, Roméo Dallaire (41)	4
7.	VERMEER IN BOSNIA, Lawrence Weschler (1)	
8.	HEGEMONY OR SURVIVAL, Noam Chomsky (36)	7
9.	STATUS ANXIETY, Alain de Botton (2)	9
10.	THIS IS BURNING MAN, Brian Doherty (1)	

() Weeks on list
Compiled by Brian Bethune



CHICKEN LITTLE IN OTTAWA

Uh-oh: fear of Quebec separatism is again sweeping the nation's capital

IT IS ONLY fair to warn you that the people in charge are putting on their Serious Voices again. "Today, Quebecers who believe in Canada are worried," André Pratte wrote in the *Globe and Mail* on Aug. 4. Pratte is the chief editorialist of *La Presse*. He's a thoughtful guy. He looks up and he sees the sky falling. Paul Martin lost a bunch of seats in Quebec. The Bloc is back in force. Jean Charest's government teeters.

"We have to pull our heads out of the sand and face the fact that the national unity issue will periodically come back to haunt us," Pratte wrote. "Until it is solved."



Uh-oh.

The *Globe*'s man John Ibbitson chimed in a few days later, using his own best Serious Voice. "Dear Andre," he began. (This is never a good sign.) "I believe that all Canadians who treasure the federation have a duty to respond." Suddenly I felt bad. I haven't responded. It was like getting a Christmas card signed, "Season's Greetings from The Fate of Canada" and realizing you didn't send anything.

"A rewriting of the rules to accommodate the aspirations of all regions, while recognizing the uniqueness of the Quebec nation, is long overdue," Ibbitson wrote.

"The bonds are weakening everywhere, and no one has a convincing plan to strengthen them ... Any reconfiguring, then, of the Confederation to accommodate the nationalist aspirations of French Quebec must also accommodate the failure of federalism in Atlantic Canada, the growing disengagement of Alberta and other parts of the West, and the indifference of Ontario."

Well. You thought we had a pretty good country here, but apparently "bonds" are weakening, federalism has "failed" and we have to "solve" something.

It would be difficult to overstate how suddenly these sentiments have swept Ottawa. Over dinner, people whisper that another Quebec referendum is coming. They say they really don't want to watch Paul Martin fight it. But they also don't want Stephen Harper to fight it. They sigh. There is considerable sighing in the capital these days.

Into the middle of all this, as if by appointment, strides Jacques Parizeau. On Aug. 16, *La Presse* published a letter in which the wisest of all the separatists announced that, referendums being too hard to win, it was time to give up trying. Instead, the next Parti Quebecois government would interpret a simple election victory as a mandate to prepare Quebec's secession.

"The PQ would use the next election to demand a mandate to make sovereignty come about," he wrote. "If it wins, it would prepare by passing a provisional constitution by which, among other measures, a Quebec citizenship would be implemented and a constitutional court created."

I wish I could tell you the PQ has embraced Parizeau's plan for a government of revolutionary insurrection, because it would ensure the PQ never wins another election. But Parizeau has reached depths of silliness to which even the PQ will not descend. His plan has found few takers.

But again, I'm amazed how many people in political Ottawa are struck fearful by all this. Parizeau's latest rant is taken as evidence that the separatists will find some particularly clever way to swindle Quebecers out of Canada. The only person who isn't talking about the nation's new peril, of course, is Lucienne Robillard, Paul Martin's tight-lipped new intergovernmental affairs minister. She is the incarnation of Martin's national-unity strategy, which is to wish devoutly that trouble would go away.

Here's what I wish the minister or the Prime Minister would say.

Federalists: be of good cheer. The people who voted No in the 1980 and 1995 referendums were *right* to vote that way. They did not vote for a failure. Canada is not a perfect country; it can always be improved. But it doesn't need to be "solved."

There is no rule that says separatism will rise and fall like the tide. It's true that separatism was down in 1984 and back in force by 1990. But it took years of hard work to drive that support up. Who did the work? Federalists who got lost in commas.

They had a pet "solution" to Canada's "failures"—the Meech Lake accord. Meech may even have been a good idea, but its promoters stupidly made the country's survival conditional on Meech's implementation. "What is in dispute is modest, extremely modest, when compared with what is really at stake," Brian Mulroney told the Commons in 1990. "What is really at stake is Canada."

Wrong. What was at stake was a constitutional amendment. Canada abides. Like every good country, it has proved hard to break. It will be much harder to break if we maintain healthy skepticism for anyone diagnosing "failure" and peddling "solutions." M

To comment: backpage@macleans.ca
Read Paul Wells's Weblog, "Inkless Wells," at *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*

ILLUSTRATION BY AISLIN

Meet Mr. Brent Allan Davey.
He also answers to "cutie-pie."

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The remarkably influential 2004 BMW 7 Series. With an available 438hp powerplant and luxury features that are second-to-none, it's little wonder the Canadian Auto Press raved that "the new 7 embodies all of what BMW should be: stunning styling, explosive performance, sharp handling, [and] a driving position that is absolutely perfect."*

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